1982

Ready To Roll: An intrepid teacher's journey in education

Lea Cowles Masters

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An intrepid teacher's journey in education

by

LEA COWLES MASTERS

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Edited by
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To Roy Wellington Cowles

On the front steps of the Brockport Alumni House, September 7, 1980.
From left, *Marianne Marchlik Virgilio, former director of alumni affairs; Lea Cowles Masters; Peg Hare Browne; Helen Middlebrook, Lea Masters' sister; Dr. Orlo L. Derby, professor emeritus of education; Dr. Albert W. Brown, former president of the State University of New York College at Brockport.*

FOREWORD

On January 27, 1980, a group of alumni, faculty emeriti, and friends of the State University of New York College at Brockport gathered for a reunion luncheon in Green Valley, Arizona. Among the speakers at the informal gathering was Lea Cowles Masters, a 1917 graduate of the College's forerunner, the Brockport Normal School. The audience was fascinated with the descriptions of her life that unfolded with style, humor, and insight.

Sensing that Mrs. Masters' story transcended the mere account of one person's life, Albert W. Brown, president of Brockport at that time, and Ralph Gennarino, a retired vice president and a member of the Brockport Foundation Inc. board of directors, initiated a plan to make a permanent record of the recollections.

Dr. Brown captured the spirit of the account when he wrote:

"Seldom do we have an opportunity to be part of the life of those rare and gifted persons whose interests and achievements span the great changes from rural 19th century America through expanded roles in the Caribbean, South, the United Nations and, finally, the 'Great Society' of the 1960s. One such exciting person is Lea Masters, whose experiences and creative leadership in primary education have left their impact around the world. Her concern, dedication and ability come through in this very human narrative, flavored throughout by the charm and humor which continue to characterize her thought and speech.

"Her 86 years of serving and learning have gone on uninterrupted. Her reflections in the interplay, importance and impact of people and events serve each of us whether in education or otherwise engaged. Her 65 years since graduation from Brockport Normal School should help us, whether Brockport alumni or not, reflect on the decades we have and may yet be allotted.

"Those who have assisted in one way or another in preserving her experience and reflections pay tribute to generations of leadership in the movements which have shaped America."

As the Foundation's coordinator of special projects, I was asked to carry out the publication plan. Writing such a long manuscript was difficult for Mrs. Masters, so we arranged for her to dictate her remembrances using a tape recorder. Within five months, nine hours of recordings had been sent to the Foundation's offices at the College. A rough transcript had been prepared by September 1980, when Mrs. Masters visited the campus. She returned to Arizona with the document and worked on it during the following winter and spring. Late in 1981, Ronald A. Watts of the College's Community Relations Office was assigned the general editorial duties. Assisted by other members of the Office, he edited the text, assembled photographs, engaged writers for the chapter introductions, and shepherded the book through the production process.

Dr. Gennarino pointed to the significance of Mrs. Masters' account when he expressed a hope that "readers will know and appreciate how important teaching children can be to our society. As a source of inspiration for all present and future teachers, may it serve as a reminder that teaching is, perhaps, the single most important vocation a person can embrace today."

Projects of this sort involve immense gifts of time and talent by scores of people. Dr. Arthur M. Lee, a Brockport history professor emeritus, devoted his skills and enthusiasm from the very beginning. Not only did he work closely with Mrs. Masters in the preparation of the manuscript, he also wrote a chapter introduction dealing with the Papago Indians whom he has studied since moving to Arizona. Dr. Kenneth O'Brien and Dr. W. Bruce Leslie, professors of history, generously contributed other chapter introductions.

Also important to the realization of the book have been Dr. John Van de Wetering, president of the College; Michael Cavalcanti,

Foundation board of directors chairman; Harry J. Sentiff, former Foundation board of directors chairman; Thomas Murphy, member of the Foundation Advisory Board; Marianne Virgilio, Foundation executive director; Warren W. Klenk, former executive director; and Patrick Madama, director of alumni relations.

Special thanks should also go to Kathleen Richards, director of publications, for contributing her editing and design talents; to Virginia Ioannone, for her expert typing and sharp-eyed proof reading; to Gordon Bemis, assistant director, audio-visual services; and to Debbie DeTar, Nancy Rath and Stephanie Taylor who diligently worked on tape transcripts and early manuscript typing.

Peg Hare Browne

Lea Masters and Dr. Brown, September 7, 1980.

Preface

When I met my first class of seventh grade students in Port Jervis, New York, 65 years ago, I had little idea that I was beginning a career in education that would take me through the vibrant, innovative halls of Columbia University Teachers College, the remote islands of the Caribbean, the early United Nations of Lake Success, the deep south of Alabama, and finally to the Papago Indian Reservation of Arizona. Most young women born in Canandaigua, New York, (in the heart of the Finger Lakes) and educated at the Brockport Normal School would not have expected to count Eleanor Roosevelt, Henry Morgenthau, Irving Berlin, Madame Pandit Nehru, Sargent Shriver, Margaret Meade, and a host of others who played key roles in the political, social and educational life of the United States among their acquaintances. But somehow my unwavering, intrepid journey through life provided me with these opportunities.

This book is an account of those experiences. Because I saved no notes, letters, papers, reports, and all the other grist of memoirs, I have had to rely on my memory. To draw together the remembrances of a lifetime has been one of the most difficult and even annoying assignments faced in a long time. But I persevered, supported by the words of Mahatma Gandhi, "My message is my life."

I should also add that the book is an account of selected experiences. No attempt has been made to record a detailed, historical account of the period. Rather I have selected incidents which I feel

illustrate principles of education, personal growth, interpersonal relations, and most important, the basic goodness and kindness found in people from all walks of life. In a very real sense, "my message is my life, too."

Dr. Arthur Lee, a retired history professor at the State University College at Brockport, New York, played a major role in preparing this account. Sometime after moving to my neighborhood in Arizona, he heard that an alumna of his school, who had had some interesting experiences, was living nearby. Through Dr. Lee I met others from the College who joined in encouraging me to record these events. They pointed out that the 1930s through 1960s, when I was actively engaged in teaching, was an era of great importance in the recognition of pre-school education.

During that period interest was focused for the first time on the needs of young children (two to six years of age) in all phases of their development, and on the educational guidance of their parents. Influenced by the leaders of education, health, and welfare, the federal government was instrumental in offering financial assistance to states for programs to meet children's needs. In retrospect, I wonder how many of us who were caught up in the busy, exciting tasks were really cognizant of this phenomenal era. Given a special job to do, we girded our loins for action and went to work.

One hesitates to be specific about the people and events which shaped a life. But I should like to mention at least two. Dr. Grace Langdon, a professor of early education at Columbia University Teachers College, observed my activities and kept in touch with my progress after leaving Columbia. She rose to be national director of the Federal Nursery School Program in the 1930s. Later she organized her own educational service in New York and in the 1960s moved to Arizona where she collaborated in educational programs with professors at Arizona State University. She was a true inspiration to me. "The greatest thing in the world is just about to happen," was the way she always opened the discussion of a new project. And I was often a part of that project. Dr. Pauline Knapp Wilson of the University of Alabama was also responsible for my professional growth. She was director of the Child Development Department in the School of Home Economics and well acquainted with national educational leaders. Through her I became acquainted with Margaret

Meade, Lillian Galbraith, (who wrote "Cheaper by the Dozen") and many others.

I have been happy and content with my life. I don't recall wishing for another career. The story of my life is that I happened to be in the right place at a time when my services were needed and an opportunity presented itself. There were times of fun, rare friendships, rich experiences, and yes, sadness and disappointments.

In a sense, I would like to think of this book as dedicated to my son, Roy, who died in his fifth year. The book, while an autobiography, is about little children in the same stages of development as Roy. My life's work was an enlarged reflection of a mother's devotion to her own young child.

I only hope that readers will be entertained and perhaps find some inspiration and new meaning to their lives in this account.

Lea Cowles Masters
Green Valley, Arizona

April 1982

Editor's Note: Mrs. Masters died in her sleep at her Green Valley home July 24, 1982. Eighteen days earlier, she delighted in her return from an enforced convalescence following a hip operation to her own apartment and her schedule of exercising, walking, eating and resting. She wrote to Brockport friends on July 10: "The health home is not for me just yet—I'm too eager to do many things... I have it made!!!"

One

From Canandaigua to Columbia

Lea Cowles Masters' early career tells us not just about an exceptional woman, but about the remarkable developments in American education between World War I and the Depression. Her anecdotes give us glimpses into different worlds stretching from the small upstate Brockport Normal School to the mighty Columbia University Teachers College.

The Brockport described by Mrs. Masters is very different from today's large, multi-purpose College. The 30-year-old Brockport Collegiate Institute was one of the handful of local institutions that the state began subsidizing in the 1860s in exchange for providing teacher training. These "normal schools" continued to offer other courses of study for a few decades, but after the turn of the century, the state decided to restrict the offerings to a two-year teacher preparation program. As Mrs. Masters describes, the curriculum focused specifically upon the subject matter and methodology of the grammar school. The fieldwork was carried out through the Training School Department, which was headed in her time by Charles D. Cooper, whose good nature made Mrs. Masters a community relations ambassador on at least one occasion. He was also presumably responsible for sending Mrs. Masters out into the countryside to teach physical exercises. Her horse-drawn trips reflected the sudden fixation around World War I with physical training in the schools and the increasing power of the state to influence curricula in local schools.

After graduating from Brockport Normal School Mrs. Masters entered the teaching profession in Port Jervis. She followed the well-worn

route of several teaching positions, marriage, and childbirth. But then Mrs. Masters departed from the norm. Rather than leaving education, she enrolled at Columbia and began what would become a much broader career. Although she followed a path that was rare for young female teachers, at least the road between Brockport and Teachers College was not uncharted; Charles Cooper had taken his master's degree there, and a former president of the Normal School was a professor of mathematics at Teachers College.

From 1925 to 1932 Mr. and Mrs. Cowles led a life in New York City that sounds familiar to today's graduate students. Both parents pursued their studies while bringing up a child. The boy was enrolled in a nursery school when that was still a fairly rare experience.

The excitement of Teachers College and of New York City in the 1920s and early 1930s shines through Mrs. Masters' anecdotes. The Cowles' son was intrigued by a dance workshop offered by Ruth St. Denis and her husband, Ted Shawn. The boy's development was judged in terms of the new work of the psychologist Arnold Gesell. The two parents had different approaches to child-rearing; the father was wedded to older ideas of habit formation while the mother showed a Benjamin Spock-like interest in creativity and in understanding the child's perspective.

Then came the death of her child. Every parent is immediately struck with the thought: How did Mrs. Masters go on? She attributes her continuing strength to her work. Her graduate training at Columbia's Child Development Institute was clearly exciting. Child study was a new field making giant strides in the 1920s. Mrs. Masters' insightful anecdotes about her pupils' home lives and her son's development suggest that she was very sensitive to children's needs and receptive to the child-centered education that was Columbia's trademark in those years.

As one who grew up near New York City and was taught by women trained in that philosophy and era, I have a special respect for that pioneer generation. Although Mrs. Masters does not mention it, one can assume that absorbing the atmosphere of the Columbia of John Dewey, George Counts, William H. Kilpatrick, et. al. *inspired her and was partially responsible for her resilience as she left New York with both triumph and tragedy behind her.*

Dr. W. Bruce Leslie
Associate Professor of History
SUNY College at Brockport

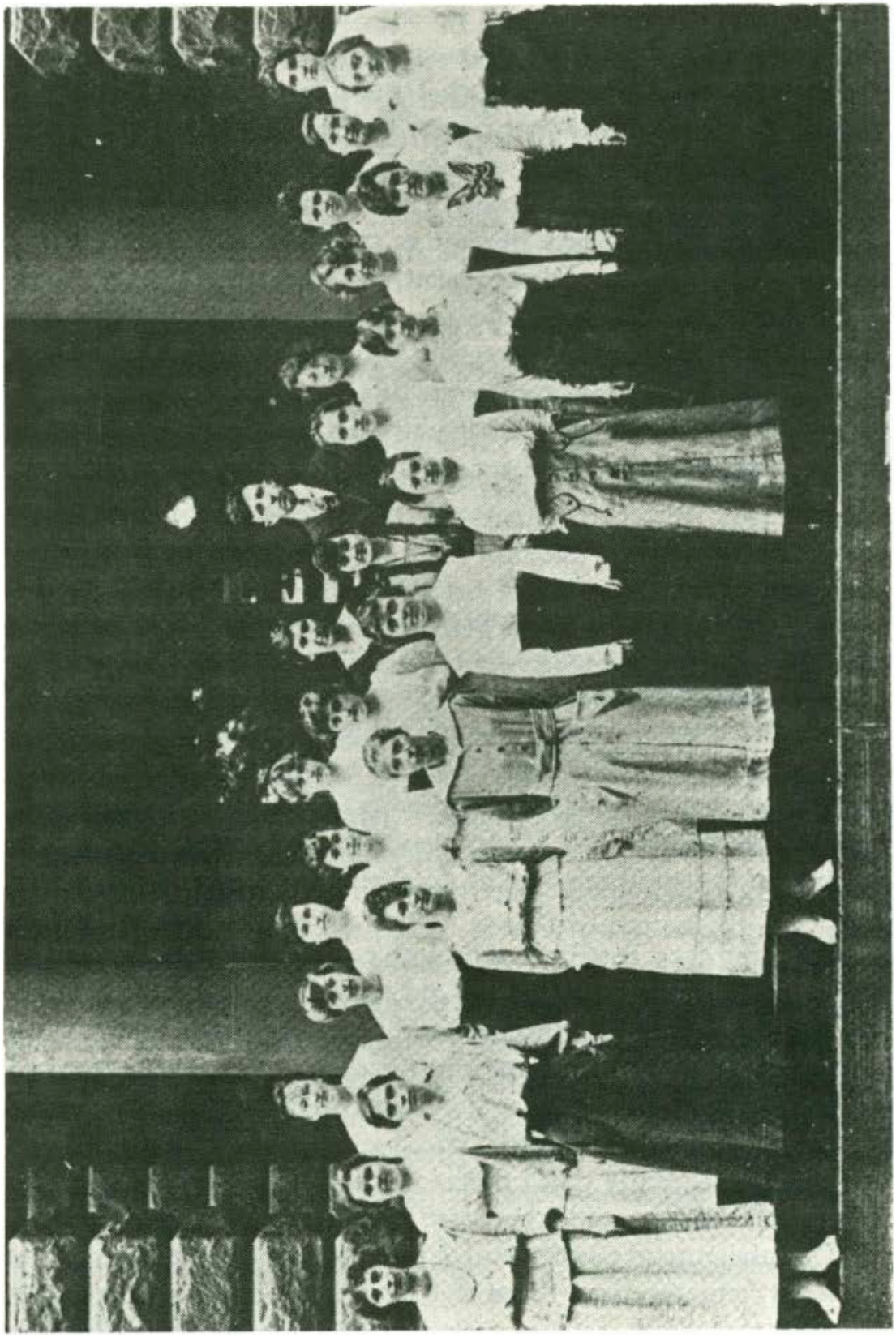
I realize now that the education for my career began at Brockport Normal School. In 1915, having been graduated from Canandaigua Academy, Canandaigua, New York, I found myself at Brockport. At that time it offered a two-year course leading to a life certificate to teach in the grammar schools of New York State.

Teaching was not my chosen field; I doubt if I had any serious desires to specialize in any pursuit at that time. The interest and innate ability might have been present, but were not apparent to me then. It happened that there was an aunt living near the Normal School with whom I might live, and thus further my education. I recall learning elementary rudiments of subject matter, methods of teaching, the preparation of lesson planning, art, music and physical exercise, and having help in becoming a satisfactory disciplinarian.

In the last half of my second year, a state regulation became effective imposing daily physical exercises as a part of the grammar school programs. The authorities at Brockport offered to supply student teachers to implement this project. This was the first time I realized that Brockport Normal School was not only interested in training teachers but also in what was happening in the state; and being an important institution, the school was asked to furnish students to send out to the rural schools to do their practice teaching at that time.

It was my good fortune, along with one other senior student, to be given the task of visiting three rural schools in the county one day each week, to teach both teachers and pupils certain physical exercises. Lesson plans and explanations were left with them. In fear and trembling I had to drive a horse and buggy on those trips. I had never driven a horse in my life. Each time, I started out with tears in my eyes, praying fervently that I might successfully perform the duties given me, and safely guide the horse back home.

This assignment continued for two months and I recall that we received a remuneration. From this experience I learned that, with preparation and self-assurance, one could be ready for almost any new venture.



"She has nothing in common with others," it was written of Lena A. Boyle (Lea Masters) in the 1917 commencement issue of the Brockport Normal School Stylus. Shown above in her class photograph, Lena Boyle is third from the left in the top row.

I have a recollection of another experience that demonstrated the close, friendly, interested relations between the townspeople with their interests, and the normal school. One morning during my second year, I was passing through the hall after a class, when I spotted my aunt looking eagerly around for me. When she saw me, she said:

"Look, I've just seen Mr. Cooper, (he was the professor in charge of practice assignments) and it's all right. I need you for a little while. Go home, put on your white dress and hurry over to the church. The organist is there; she will tell you what to do. The Old Soldiers and Relief Corps is meeting soon, and the person who was supposed to sing 'The Vacant Chair' is ill. I told them you would do it."

"But Aunt Augusta! I don't know that song."

"Yes you do, you know it, it goes like this: 'We shall meet, but we shall miss him. There will be one vacant chair.' "

Well, I did remember it. I couldn't refuse her, so off I went.

On the front platform of the church stood a large mahogany-armed chair, upholstered in beautiful purple velvet. I was directed to hold the song book in my right hand and try gracefully to place my other hand on the chair while I sang, "We shall meet, but we shall miss him. There will be one vacant chair. We shall linger to caress it, while we breathe our evening prayer." This was the chorus; there were two or three verses.

I managed the first verse and chorus and then looked down at friends in the audience. Handkerchiefs were evident, and some weeping and sobbing could be heard. Easily affected by weeping, I continued to sing the next verses as my own tears fell. The front of my dress was getting wet. As I leaned over toward the chair during the chorus, tear spots appeared on the velvet. Near the end I was weeping so, it was difficult to sing the last chorus. I quietly left the building and hurried home, ashamed and in disgrace.

My aunt said afterwards that they were especially pleased with my effort. No one had given such a dramatic performance before. As for me, I swore I would never render a solo in public again.

After graduation from Brockport Normal School in 1917, I sallied forth for my first position as seventh grade teacher in an Erie Railroad town of Port Jervis, New York, for the "munificent" salary of $45 a month.

Two incidents occurred during the first year that are still fresh in my memory. All my life I had been the victim of embarrassing circumstances. But my Irish father endowed me with a sense of humor that has helped me to accept these situations graciously.

In the early fall, the new teachers — six of us as I recall — were invited to meet the Board of Education members at the President's home. We had gone upstairs to lay aside our wraps. At the foot of the stairs stood the receiving committee waiting for us to descend.

The stairs were slippery, and there were no railings to grasp. As we went down (in alphabetical order) there was one person ahead of me. Next to the last step her high heels slipped, and she fell backward on me. The result was that both of us sat down, landing at the feet of the President of the board. Silence ensued, and since the first teacher looked as if she were unable to speak, I smiled, looked up, and said, "Well, here we are!" That broke the ice and we were at once given the red carpet treatment.

Another incident involving discipline taught me most succinctly the importance of parents in our children's lives and in ours as teachers.

Two or three unruly boys in my classroom persisted in disobeying the rules of standing and marching quietly and orderly when being dismissed. They were staying after school as punishment. Suddenly across the street the mother of one of them called out, "Frank, it's time to take your father's lunch pail."

Several fathers worked on the railroad and at this time of day expected their sons to bring their lunch pails to meet them when the train pulled in. The mother called anxiously a second time. Something had to give. The boys stared rather insolently at me waiting to see what I would do.

Finally, I said, "Your fathers are important, aren't they? Your

The Brockport Normal School as it appeared in the early part of the century.

mothers are, too." They nodded. "For they're taking care of their families," I continued. "What will happen if your father misses his supper? Will you be punished?" They nodded yes. "Well, you're important, too. I'm trying to help you all do what is right. Isn't it silly to have to sit here just because you don't want to obey the rules of the school?" They nodded yes. "Well, I think your fathers are very important, so go fast before your mothers become upset." They hurried out, each to his own house.

I sat down and wept, feeling that I had lost my ability to discipline these youngsters. I dreaded to face them the next day, but Eureka! From then on we were friends. There was no difficulty.

Another problem presented itself during my second year of teaching. Durwood was a lad who usually came to school late; he fell asleep in class; he was slovenly; he seemed uninterested in school. The children were becoming unfriendly toward him because there was a rule that if there had been no tardiness during the week, school could be dismissed 15 minutes earlier on Friday. His tardiness kept the class from enjoying early dismissal. Talking to Durwood did no good, nor did my scolding and pleading. I decided to visit his home to see what might be done.

One afternoon as I neared his home, I saw a woman bending down, working in a garden plot in the yard. As I approached her, asking if she were Durwood's mother, she rose, looked at me and smiled. "You must be Durwood's teacher, I'm so glad to know you. Isn't he wonderful? I don't know what we'd do without him. Let me tell you what he does. His father was injured a few weeks ago and has not been able to do any work. Durwood gets up early to milk our few cows, and deliver the milk before breakfast. Sometimes he's late and doesn't have time for breakfast. I try to have him get to bed early, but he has to take care of the chickens and bring the cows in. The neighbors try to help but they're busy, too."

I was speechless. Everything I had planned to say to this mother was superfluous. With the wish that the father would soon recover, I made my way home to consult the principal and somehow find a way to help that family.

The boys in the class took turns, along with a father once in a while, to help Durwood mornings and after school. His mother made breakfast for them all and suppers for the helpers. They vied with each other to do more than their turn. Sometimes I'd find them fussing over who was going over because the mother made pancakes for them and all sorts of special breakfasts that they never had at home.

As a result Durwood became a leader in his group. The children learned that friends are important and helping someone gives a great sense of happiness. The teacher learned once more that parents can help her to be a more useful person in guiding the children in her charge.

When I had been at Port Jervis for two years and was returning to school after lunch, some of the children outside said, "There's a stranger up in your room. We peeked. He's looking at things on your desk. He wants to see you, we think."

I wondered who it might be. When I went in, he announced that he was the school superintendent from Caldwell, New Jersey, a small town across the New York State border. He said, "I've been looking at your lesson plans, and anyone who can write a lesson plan like that must be a good teacher."

I thought, "Well, I learned it at Brockport Normal School." Sometimes I wrote a lesson plan not knowing exactly what meat to put on the bones, but the plan was there. His offer of a salary that was double my present one was too much to refuse. So I accepted it and went to Caldwell that next year. I stayed only a year, but one experience was particularly memorable.

Afternoons, I went walking with the children, sometimes one way, sometimes another, to see where they lived and to meet their mothers, because I really believed that getting to know the family would be helpful. Along the way one day, we heard some singing. It came from a large house in the middle of a spacious lawn surrounded by a low wall. We stopped to rest there and listen.

Two or three days later we walked back there to find if we could hear the music, when a servant came out of the door and in German

said, "*Kommen Sie herein!*" The children looked at me and I said, "Oh, he's speaking German; he wants us to come and see him." I was a bit nervous about it, but said, "Come, we'll go up to the porch." I explained to him that I was a teacher and that we were out walking. He said, "Come in, Madame Schumann-Heink would like to meet you." The world-renowned contralto was a most gracious person. She shook hands with us, called all the children "darling" and said, "Here, we must have chocolate and some cookies, and then I will sing to you."

The children were speechless with excitement, and said afterwards they never had had such wonderful food. Madame sang one of her German songs. Then we thanked her and left. It was near the end of her career. We walked back there several times, but she had left. The servant told us that she came back there to rest between engagements.

The following years of teaching in the grammar schools were certainly not dull and uninteresting. After my experience with a seventh grade at Caldwell, I returned to Port Jervis, again teaching the seventh grade until assuming the responsibilities of principal and fourth grade teacher of Riverside Grammar School. One more year in an eighth grade at Nyack, New York, followed, but the need to complete my college education became apparent. The opportunity did not present itself until spring 1925, when I resigned to marry Willard Bunce Cowles, a native of Connecticut.

We settled in New York City near Columbia University where we both could pursue our college requirements and at the same time find part-time work. My husband had a burning desire for a doctorate in international law leading to a career in government diplomatic service. By this time my interests showed a definite bent toward early child development for the two to six-year-olds along with parent education and guidance.

The following seven years were busy ones as a homemaker, part-time college student, and teacher. In 1927 our son, Roy, was born, and after two years of part-time study, my efforts culminated with a bachelor of science degree in education and in 1932 with a

master of arts degree in child development and parent education from Columbia University.

One of the courses required observation of young children in all phases of their development and offered an opportunity to practice teach. As a mother, I had first-hand experience with our own son during his formative years. A few instances here illustrate the theories and practices during that time.

One of our texts by Dr. Arnold Gesell of Yale University described the results of research studies in the normal development of children from birth through adolescence. These norms became the bible for us involved in studying and guiding children.

One afternoon, while reading Gesell's norms, I began observing our son, then about seven months old. He was on his stomach on a blanket on the floor — manipulating a toy. It slipped out of his hands, stopping slightly ahead of him out of reach. Roy seemed to be pushing himself up on his hands and with bent knees trying to push forward to reach the toy.

I became excited. My child was normal. He was beginning to crawl just as Gesell had described. After dinner that evening, I duplicated the situation. I placed Roy on the blanket with the toy in front of him, hoping that he would try to crawl. But he just lay there, uninterested. Attempting to interest him brought forth no response. My husband said, "He isn't ready; you only thought he crawled." A student, majoring in physics, came in just then and, after watching my effort, said, "The coefficient of friction between Roy and the blanket is insufficient for motion." My enthusiasm burst like a bubble, but I was sure he was normal.

Another episode demonstrated an effort to teach consistency and habit training because there was a belief that if you missed the opportunity once, you were lost. It was like the mother who asked, "Don't I always tell you to wash your hands before eating?" and the child responds, "Once you didn't." This involved teaching.

My husband; Roy, then three; and I had been shopping. Upon our return Roy produced from his pocket a small red gadget and said, "Look Mommy, a little red light for my tricycle. I need it."

"But where did you get it?"

"I found it at the store while you and Daddy were shopping. I climbed up on the chair and took it from a box."

"Did anyone see you? Was anyone around? Didn't they tell you to put it back?"

"No one was there," Roy responded.

Father entered the picture at just that moment. "My gosh, he stole it. This is serious. You can't keep it, it isn't yours. You'll have to take it back."

"But Daddy, I need it," and Roy betook himself to another room to sulk.

After a long discussion, father being very serious about it, and rather disgusted, peered in, looked at his child and said, "Look at him, our bright three-year-old son, Roy Wellington Cowles, a common thief, and he's still sucking his thumb. I wash my hands of the whole affair. You're the child development expert, you can handle it. He must be taught not to steal. He must take it back."

I was upset about the incident, but I said, "This is a phase that kindergarten and first grade children sometimes go through. I've heard that teachers sometimes have to search pockets before the children go home because they take parts of special toys home."

"It is stealing pure and simple, and must be curbed," his father replied.

The next afternoon, mother and child returned to the store. Having been prompted, Roy raised the gadget up in his hand and said to the clerk, "I took this and I didn't pay for it. My daddy said I have to give it back." The clerk, an older man, leaned over the counter to see who spoke, and said, "Oh, the little thing for your tricycle, eh?" "Yes," Roy answered, "and I wanted it."

I interrupted and asked if Roy might possibly pay for it. "Well, I guess that would be all right. It's five cents, do you have that much?" the clerk asked. Roy, already prepared, had taken some change out of his bank for this emergency. He found the nickel and handed it to the clerk.

Then the man said, "Well, you've got a red light, have you got a

green one?" "No," Roy said, "I haven't."

"You've paid for yours, I'll give you a green one. You need it, so you'll know whether you're coming or going." After thanking the clerk and tucking both lights in his pocket, Roy and I hurried home. Did Roy learn not to take something that didn't belong to him? Your guess is as good as mine.

Whenever I speak before a group, I am reminded of a personal experience during my graduate work at Columbia.

One morning at breakfast with my husband and son, I was nervous and concerned about a book report due at the 9 a.m. class. Suddenly my husband said, "Lea, what's the matter with you? You're so fidgety, you make me nervous. You know I have an exam this morning — I can hardly choke down my breakfast — what gives?"

"I'm beside myself," I answered, "I am nervous! I have to give a book report this morning and Roy acts as if he's coming down with a cold and the nurse won't let him stay in nursery school. I was up with him last night and I didn't sleep much. And I'm worried about the report."

After a deep silence, my husband asked, "You've read the book, haven't you?"

"Of course, I've read the book — and I think the report is pretty good, but I'm nervous just the same, and I'm afraid my voice will shake."

Roy, shoveling in the corn flakes, remarked, "Mommy, you could sing!"

That broke the ice. We all laughed. Then, my husband said, "Honey, I learned once that just before you have to speak, just close your eyes and whisper to yourself, 'I know more about this than anybody here.' It will give you self-assurance, and you'll do well."

The nursery school accepted Roy that morning and I went on my way to class. My husband's advice did give me assurance before I stood up and gave the report. At the end of the class, my professor, who had been sitting in the rear of the room, came down the aisle with some strangers. "Lea, that was a good report. I want you to meet the *author* of the book!"

One afternoon I hurried home, my arms full of groceries. I was met at the door by Roy, who exclaimed, "Mommy, you can't come in, you'll get wet."

"Lordy, Lordy, what is the child doing now?" I asked myself. "Here I am, arms full of groceries, and I must get dinner."

Then came the dawn. Three-year-old Roy was pretending water play at the seashore. A few days earlier, Ted Shawn, the famous dancer, had visited the campus with his wife, Ruth St. Denis. He was interested in demonstrating interpretive dancing with very young children. He invited as many three and four-year-olds as possible, with their mothers, to attend an afternoon session in a hall at Van Cortland Park. Roy's father even took the afternoon off to observe.

There must have been around 60 boys and girls lined up for action, all facing one way with Ted Shawn in front. He related to the children unusually well, and their response was thrilling. He took the hands of the children in the middle of the line and said: "Let's play we're at the seashore. We're walking in the sand. Let's put one foot in the water and see how it feels. Oh, it's cool. Shake it. Let's back up a little. Let's wade in a ways. Oh, here comes a big wave. Let's jump right in it, jump up and down. Oh, it's so nice. Let's sit down in the water, lie down and roll over and over. Put out your hands and splash up and down. It's time to get back to shore. It's time to go. Good-bye."

This performance, which took 10 to 15 minutes, struck a spark in Roy and he was off.

Back to the Cowles' household, with Mommy wanting to come in, Roy said, "Oh, you're at the shore, how nice. I have my bathing suit on."

"I'll just wade in and cross over to the shore."

"You'll get your shoes all wet."

"How will it be if I take them off, then I can wade over."

"Okay, your socks too."

Depositing my footwear outside, I was ushered into the sea, through which we waded to the shore near the kitchen door. Roy cavorted blissfully in the pretend waves while I went about my business barefooted. Finally the game was over and quiet descended.

The peace was broken by the father's voice at the door. "What in thunder are your slippers and socks doing out here on the mat? Did you start undressing before you got inside?"

"Daddy," Roy explained, "we were playing in the water, and Mommy didn't want to get her shoes wet."

"Well I suppose this is just another phase he is going through," his father said. "If not, what do you call those people who live in a dream world? Is he heading that way?"

We didn't enroll Roy in Ted Shawn's class. He had enough interpretive ability of his own.

In 1932 when my husband received his degree in law and I earned a master's degree in child development, tragedy struck. Roy, then five years old, developed spinal meningitis. After three operations, he died at St. Luke's Hospital across the avenue from the University. It showed us that the things we cherished most, we couldn't keep. It taught us that we mustn't rely too heavily on others for our happiness. We must stress other opportunities for fulfillment. Emerson's essay on "Compensation" was our guide. If you want something you can't have, it's best to change what you want, make a choice, accept it, and try to live with it.

My years of study for the master's degree and my successful work with children gradually convinced me to continue my teaching career, especially with young children and their parents. My graduate courses were offered at Columbia's Child Development Institute. Professors in all phases of education, training, experience, and research of young children comprised the faculty. Two well-equipped centers for two and three-year-old children offered observation and practice for students preparing for teaching the preschoolers. I taught the group of three-year-old children and later worked in research with Dr. Arthur T. Jersild at the Institute. The experience gave me a concept of the proper types of furnishings and play materials required in children's center programs.

At the Institute, each student teacher was assigned certain children who needed help in getting along with their peers. One of my pupils, Andrew, found it most difficult to pretend and engage in imaginative play, and thus would get into all sorts of difficulty with the other children.

One day, a loud voice sounded from the doll house in the play yard. Andrew came running and yelling at the top of his voice, "I want to be the papa of Carol's baby and she says no I can't, Larry is. And look Mrs. Cowles, he's wheeling the carriage up and down and having such a nice time, and I want to be the papa!"

Carol leaned out of the door of the playhouse and said, "You can be the grandfather, if you want to." "No I can't," Andrew replied. "I have no whiskers." Our efforts to teach him to pretend failed.

I had other problems on my hands. A child of a German family was accepted in the group. The father, an able professor, had found employment at the University and the mother brought little Louie, aged three, crying bitterly and clinging to his mother. She was upset and distraught because she herself was trying to become accustomed to things in New York and cope with family problems. Louie evidently was the baby and understood only German. He was still cutting teeth and had not yet been toilet trained. So the poor child, not only crying, drooling at the mouth, and wet at the other end, was a forlorn little soul. He wore a navy blue suit which was one or two sizes too large for him and when he walked, the seat of the pants was way down by his knees. We couldn't help but smile to ourselves, and say, "Little Droopy Drawers."

We had to protect Louie because the children, and especially one named Frankie, enjoyed teasing him. It was my special job to help Frankie be more thoughtful of the younger children, develop some sympathy for them, and become more helpful. One day, I asked Frankie if he wouldn't like to help me with little Louie and maybe become a big brother. Would he help me assist him across the

street to the play yard, help me bring him in when it was time for lunch, and take off his heavy snow suit, galoshes, mittens and hat, and show him how to hang them in his locker?

After four or five weeks, Frankie became quite thoughtful and whenever he heard it was time to come in or to get ready to go out, he would look for Louie and help him. It was a joy to see Frankie's change and Louie's acceptance.

One day, Frankie brought Louie in and was struggling with him in the restroom, taking off his things and putting them away, Louie suddenly looked up at Frankie with the most angelic smile. Those of us who were watching were affected by the scene. Frankie put his hand on Louie's shoulder, and looking up at me said, "Mrs. Cowles, isn't he cute? Isn't Louie cute? I love little Louie. I'm going to marry him when I get big!" (Remember, this was 1933.)

Professor Mary Schwartz Rose, the famous nutritionist at Columbia Teachers College, had given the three-year-olds group a pair of white rats which her students did not need for experimentatic n. It was thought that the children might enjoy them and learn about reproduction because the mother rat would soon have a litter. Since I was the first teacher to arrive in the morning, two or three children helped me change the paper under the cage, clean the dishes, and replace the water and food. The rats were separated and the children gave more food to the larger rodent who was presumed to be the mother. One morning, Frankie called out excitedly, "Oh look, the papa rat had the babies. They're moving all about the cage, and he isn't paying any attention to them." "We'll leave them alone," I said, "but I don't believe that's the papa. Papas can't have babies." Frankie was unconvinced.

Two

Nursery Schools Under the Palms

When Franklin Delano Roosevelt took the Presidential Oath of Office on March 4, 1933, the United States was facing its greatest crisis since the Civil War of the 1860s. Despite the efforts of Herbert Hoover, who had introduced the most sweeping domestic reform program in American history, the Great Depression worsened year after year. Slowly, and apparently inexorably, the decline had wiped out the fragile prosperity of the previous decade. The economy lay in shambles.

Corporations, of course, had suffered during this slide, but the evidence of mass suffering was more compelling. Breadlines, rather than prosperity, were what millions found "around the corner," and 'Hoovervilles" — urban shanty towns — had sprung up overnight. By 1933 about 13 million men and women, more than one-quarter of the work force, were unemployed and another quarter was under-employed.

Increasing numbers of farmers were unable to meet their mortgage payments, and the number of foreclosures rose dramatically in 1932 and early 1933, which meant that the banks were under greater pressure to meet their obligations. This led to the "bank runs" of the period, as millions of depositors rushed to get their savings out of the banks in advance of their expected failure; these "bank runs" in turn, contributed to increased failures.

When in the face of this, Roosevelt said that "the only thing we have to fear is fear itself, nameless, unreasoning, fear, ..." he was overstating the case, for millions of his countrymen had a great deal to fear indeed. The

cause of such fears — the depression — was all too real and all too devastating.

In his first presidential campaign Roosevelt had promised the voters a "New Deal." It quickly took form in the early days of the administration. In his first "fireside chat," the President successfully convinced his fellow citizens that the banking system was sound, and within a week, more than a billion dollars in assets were returned to the banks by their depositors. Other problems would prove much more difficult, but the image of activity would be constant throughout this early period, which historians have called the "first hundred days."

During these first few months, the Roosevelt administration created the National Recovery Administration for industry, the Agricultural Adjustment Act for the farmers, and the Public Works Administration for the unemployed.

The reach of the federal government was extended into areas of life which had been unimaginable only a decade before, touching millions of citizens directly. One such was Lea Masters, who as she describes in this chapter, was sent to the Virgin Islands to establish a nursery school program. Like direct relief, aid to farmers, aid to industries, and support for labor, education was now included in the expanded concerns of the federal government.

Uniting all these programs was a spirit, a new ethic of active service by the government during economic crisis. It was a time, according to Roosevelt, for "bold, persistent experimentation." From the moment of his nomination by the Democratic Party, when he broke with tradition and flew to Chicago to address the convention, the Roosevelt years are remembered for giving hope to those millions who had suffered so acutely. "The nation," he said, "asks for action, and action now."

And action it got, with thousands of young, middle-aged and older men and women streaming into Washington with new ideas and old dreams to alleviate the pain of the Depression. When they returned to the farms, towns and cities from which they came, it was with the message that the Old Order had changed. One small indication of the change was the dramatic increase in White House mail, as hundreds of people began to write to the President each day, telling him of their troubles and congratulating him on his legislative triumphs. This sense of the new — this personal excitement — was apparent whenever spokesmen for the Administration, such as the President's wife, Eleanor, appeared far from the

Capital, whether deep underground in the coal mines of Appalachia or the American dependencies of the sun-drenched Caribbean.

Dr. Kenneth P. O'Brien
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In 1934 there was much publicity throughout the United States and its possessions that young children, especially those under five years, were suffering from family neglect or the inability to provide adequately for them. Our director at the Child Development Institute, Dr. Lois Meek, along with several specialists, attended a conference where it was announced that something great was about to happen. The federal government was preparing to offer to the states funds for organizing services for young children. Earlier, officials in Washington requested the Institute's help in preparing booklets and plans for the organization and conduct of nursery schools. With the availability of government funds, a vast government nursery school program became an actuality practically overnight. It became evident that persons trained in this special field would be in great demand by some states. I felt prepared and was available when and if teachers were needed. It seemed my good fortune to become a specialist almost overnight.

One Saturday evening Dr. Meek's office called to ask if I would organize and direct a nursery program in the Virgin Islands for three months. Dr. Paul Pearson, the new civilian governor, was in New York for interviews the following Monday. My husband and I discussed it. He was prepared to leave shortly for his studies at Harvard University. "That's fine," he said, "you're ready to attempt a project like that. You're trained. You know Lawrence Cramer (I took over teaching his course when he left), and maybe some other college friends of ours are down there helping Dr. Pearson with his program."

I had a hazy idea at that time where the Virgin Islands were — in the Pacific somewhere, perhaps. I reacted enthusiastically. "Wouldn't it be wonderful if I could go one way and return around the world?" "Wait a minute dearie," he cautioned, "let's find out where they are before you start out." So we consulted an atlas and found that they were in the Atlantic Ocean, southeast of Florida and east of Puerto Rico.

When I was interviewed by Governor Pearson, he had already chosen two assistant graduates in child development. He wanted three centers on two islands developed; that is, equipped with furniture and play materials, and native staff trained, the children chosen, and the programs functioning.

Governor Pearson told me that he had very little money for equipment and none for supplies. Whatever I needed I must take with me from the states, he said, pointing out that there were meager materials at the library that could be used for training the teachers. I was hard put at the moment to know what I might take with me to start this program. But something gave me confidence that somehow we could make out with the native materials.

Governor Pearson presumed that I had already accepted the responsibility of directing the project. He asked, "When can you go?" I told him I would need two weeks to collect teaching materials and get my affairs in order. His answer came quickly. "This is Monday afternoon, the ship leaves on Thursday at 3 p.m. You will be on it!" I was.

I spent my leisure time on board ship contemplating the task before me. The responsibility of organizing a new program from its inception was unlike any situation I had ever encountered. I was familiar with really good centers, especially planned for demonstration and teaching, in a community in the States. But to organize such a center, ready to function adequately within a short time, seemed utterly impossible. A school teacher, no matter what her grade at a fall session, would have her room, her class of children, the assigned studies, and the general rules and regulations of the school. This program was something else — setting up a program with teaching as an end result. But years ago at Brockport Normal School I had a few experiences of being thrust in such situations with the encouragement of advisers. I was confident that with proper preparations and self-assurance no worthwhile effort was impossible.

Yet in this situation there might not even be a building or a room available in some instances. The children's program was the responsibility of the Education Department, whose superintendent might have little comprehension of what a full day's program included for three, four, and five-year-old children. He might not even be aware of the furnishings and play materials necessary. It meant carrying the whole community along with you as you organized and equipped the center, and trained the staff.

The children's daily program should give a great deal of stress to training in daily living habits of cleanliness, toilet, dressing and undressing, eating, resting, and play. The teachers should be encouraged to offer materials and guidance for creative activities such as block-building, crayoning, water and finger painting, clay modeling, and taking trips. Parent meetings should be encouraged and discussions held on health, nutrition, guidance, and discipline of the children.

I was overcome to realize that this new phase of activity was a far cry from being a teacher of a classroom of children. The closer the ship got to its destination, the more insecurity and doubt assailed me. It was with a heavy heart that I approached that first venture. I remember one event of the trip very vividly. I had packed everything — clothes, books, and supplies for the school — in one large steamer trunk. The conditions in the harbor of St. Thomas sometimes forced the ships to anchor away from the wharf. Large ungainly rowboats (called "bum boats") were used to transfer passengers and baggage to shore. It was very rough and windy when we arrived and a native had to lift us and our baggage from the ship's ladder into the bum boat. Safely in the boat, I turned to see my steamer trunk miss the boat and go billowing in the waves toward the shore. I imagined myself arriving without clothes, or a thing with which to start my work. But fortunately, it was quickly retrieved and the contents were untouched.

Governor Pearson's statement that there was nothing there for furnishings had filled me with concern, but once ashore, I found that all I needed was imagination. The islands were replete with native materials. Two centers were located near the beach where a beautiful sandy shore offered hundreds of shells and the warm waters for play. Gourds of all sizes abounded. The natives used these for dishes, wash basins, and other sorts of utensils. We used them for some of our eating utensils, until we had other materials, and also for doll play in the children's corners. Different sizes of bamboo made the educational toys. The mothers at one center gathered the vines and wove little resting mats for each child before the cots were made.

Within a short time young native women, some of them the mothers, were trained as teachers. The children were chosen, and the program was organized for them. I left one American assistant there to supervise and two of us went on to St. Croix to set up two more centers.

As I observed the families, I realized that our program was a far cry from the daily life of these families, but they were delighted with it. The natives lived in little huts with several children. There were no beds; they slept on mats on the floor or in hammocks. The native diet was frequently fish and "fungi" (rice or cornmeal). The fish was cooked together in one pot. When the natives were hungry, they would take up their dishes, or their gourds, reach in, get some food, and sit outside by themselves to eat it. They didn't have towels and washcloths or facilities where the chidren could learn to wash and take care of themselves. We saw the mothers take the little ones down to the beach, undress them, let them run along the shore gathering shells, play in the warm water in the coves, and get cleaned. Then they would run up and down in the sand and dry themselves. There was always a light warm breeze blowing, so they didn't need towels. The boys' hair was short and kinky; they didn't need combs. But the little girls' hair was braided and probably remained so for several days.

The Virgin Islands had no industry so there was no smoke smudge or dirt around. The soil was coarse sand. It was not very hard to keep clean. I found most of the natives, old and young, wore hats as a protection from the sun. The little ones wore hats pushed down over their braids. It looked as if it was very difficult to take them off. Little Hannibal Jesus, aged two, hung on to his hat for dear life when any of the teachers came along and wanted him to take it off so he would be comfortable at rest time. He would scream, grasp his hat and say, "NO! NO!" because his mother had admonished him to keep his hat on at all times. So at rest time he was perched in such a way that his hat and part of his head hung over the edge of the cot.

One day, while walking along the wall where the barge ships anchor, I saw a huge mound of soft pliable sand, much finer than that on the island. It was stored there and used as ballast for ships, the sailors said. I requested a load for the play yard. When it was brought over to the center on St. Thomas, the sand was dumped out in the bright sunlight. I asked public works to put a roof over it to shield the children from the hot sun. After days of wondering if we were going to get it, I found one morning a contraption, somewhat like a billboard, put up near the sand pile. Surely I didn't make myself clear. This was no roof. But when the sand's use had been explained, the men calculated the direction of the sun's rays and when the chidren would be using the sand. Sure enough, that billboard shaded it when it was needed.

Another incident showed that the natives were learning carpentry and simple woodwork. I asked the woodworking shop if they would bring over some boards to make a shelf to display some of the children's toys. After several days, four men appeared; a supervisor with three others, one carrying a hammer and nails and another carrying the boards. I showed them where I wanted the shelf. We all stood around watching because it was an exciting performance. One man held one end of the board and the other board was to be used for the legs at one end; another man did the same at the other end. The supervisor bent way down, squinted at the board and said, "Elevate a little." Then he pointed to the other end and said, "Decrease a little." Finally he stood back. It looked level. Pointing to the man with the hammer and the nails, he said, "Enter the nails." After the nails were pounded at one end, and then at the other, the shelf was complete. I wanted a second shelf underneath with braces and asked if they would put one in for me. After a long time I met the supervisor on the street and asked, "Aren't you coming to finish the shelf for me?" He said, "Lady, we're sick of that job." A teacher and I secured another board and completed it ourselves.

A great deal of time was spent with the practical work of setting up the centers as demonstration sites for children, parents, and anyone else who might come and observe what was being done. We also had to train the native teachers and mothers by demonstrating with the children how we did certain things. We held parents meetings to explain what we were trying to do. Those were busy, busy, exciting times. In the time allotted to us, we succeeded in organizing the three centers, one on St. Thomas, and two on St. Croix.

Governor Pearson considered us part of his official family, and when visitors came and he needed someone to help show them around and entertain them, we were asked to assist. We were honored by a visit from the President's wife, Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, and her reporter, Lorena Hickock. Mrs. Roosevelt was most friendly. She was deeply interested in all the efforts Governor Pearson and his staff were making for the natives. At the end of the tour, Mrs. Roosevelt and Miss Hickock were to leave by means of a hydroplane anchored some distance out in the harbor. Miss Hickock, a very portly woman and a poor sailor, was distraught, frightened, and apprehensive. Mrs. Roosevelt was calm, ready for the trip, and most solicitous and thoughtful of Miss Hickock.

That morning Aline Cramer and I were invited to accompany the two visitors from the wharf out to the plane. It was a windy, stormy day. On our way down to the wharf, I overheard someone say, "Those girls are crazy to risk their lives in that rough sea." We were ushered into the bum boat, thrust into seats, and told to hold on.

Mrs. Roosevelt sat close to Miss Hickock, holding her hand and trying to comfort her. Sprawling her feet out in front, Miss Hickock closed her eyes and moaned, "I can't do it; I can't do it, I wish I were dead." Aline and I sat on the other side scared to death, holding on as we were rowed out to the plane. A rope ladder was dropped down to us, and two husky airmen lifted the visitors bodily up the ladder and into the opening at the top. As we were rowed back to the wharf, the plane could be spied skimming across the waves on its way.

One early morning at the nursery center, we saw the large gate to the

play yard open, and in sidled a huge, young Virgin Islands matron. Balanced on her head was a large tray of vegetables and gourds she was taking to the open market to sell. She was bringing her two-year-old son, Hannibal Jesus of the large hat tale, to school. He was saying to his mother "Own tau, own tau." The mother stopped me and said, "What he say, Ma'am, 'own tau, own tau,' all the time?" Meanwhile, the child was tugging at his mother's skirts, urging her inside. I said, "Show mama what you mean." The poor mama had to slide sideways to get through the door. She would not relinquish the tray; it was too heavy to replace on her head. Hannibal Jesus led her into the bathroom where his towel and washcloth were hung under his name. He was saying "own towel" and wanted one at home. "Por chile," said the mother. 'Yo'ken have one des very day," and she trudged off smiling.

In my administration of federal funds, I found that the farther we were from Washington, the more carefully we complied to the letter how our money was to be spent. So in the Virgin Islands where I was solely responsible for our program, each little expenditure had to be accounted for and had to have my signature. A "crisis" concerning the bi-monthly payroll for the workers on St. Croix was a good illustration.

On the Friday nearest the 15th and on the last day of the month, the payroll was entrusted to a driver who drove the public bus from one end of St. Thomas to the other each day. One day, the bus driver delivered the payrolls to a messenger who put them on a ship which traveled to St. Croix. The funds were dispensed to the workers the following Monday. Presuming that all workers had worked their full time, I signed the payrolls on St. Thomas. The next day a cable from St. Croix announced that a worker had died of a heart attack before 3 p.m. Friday. She had not put in her full time. Our whole payroll was questioned because I had signed that the worker had given a full day's labor. This was a serious offense, but it was eventually straightened out. We were governed by modern laws, but we had to submit to primitive methods of carrying them out.

One of the new centers which we organized was on the island of St. John. The center was in a small building on top of a hill overlooking the beautiful cove where the boats came in. This was an unusual situation because the little children lived below, nearer the shore, and had to climb the hill to get to the school. They had their outdoor activity early in the morning. Because they were weary, we gave them a little breakfast, and put them to bed to rest for a while before their regular activities began.

One afternoon while I was supervising there, I was delayed in leaving by a parents meeting. I was a bit late walking down the hill to meet the mail boat, which was coming around the island to pick up passengers for St. Thomas. Far down the narrow lane, I saw a large Virgin Islander walking up the hill. In his hand he had an ugly looking machete. I became frightened because just a few weeks before, someone had entered a woman's home on St. John and murdered her with a machete.

I looked to either side of the lane to see where I might possibly hide. As he approached, shifting the machete from his left hand to his right and waving it back and forth, I was speechless. But he smiled at me and said, "Good afternoon ma'am. My little girl is up there at that school. I'm going up to get her. We think it's fine." I almost threw my arms around him I was so thankful that I was safe, but I restrained myself, smiled, and continued down the hill.

It took me a long time to get over that fright. I kept asking myself, "What am I doing here on this lonely lane late in the afternoon? I shouldn't be here." But here was my job. I had to meet the boat or I would be left on St. John without a place to stay overnight.

The next day on St. Thomas, late in the afternoon, having spent a busy day supervising activities at two centers, I decided to walk up the hill and rest on the terrace of Bluebeard's Castle where friends gathered in the evenings. On the way, the music from the natives' radios wafted through the air, and I heard the familiar voice say, "You are listening to the Edgeworth Tobacco station at Richmond, Virginia."

It made me so homesick to be back in the States, even though

the beauty of the setting sun was breathtaking. I would easily forego it all, if I would only be home. Adding insult to injury, the main feature of the National Geographic magazine which had just arrived, happened to be the Finger Lakes region of New York State. Tears flowed freely, and I mumbled to a friend, "Why on earth did I ever leave that place?" So even though there was never a dull moment in all of our days, there were heavy responsibilities, exciting experiences, and many opportunities to meet interesting persons. Yet every once in a while the overwhelming desire would come just to be back home with loved ones.

In 1935 I went to Puerto Rico with Emma Harris, an excellent teacher of young children and a graduate of the University of Puerto Rico and Columbia University, who had been one of my assistants in the Virgin Islands. We supervised the large program already organized throughout Puerto Rico. Emma and I were responsible, under the Superintendent of Education, for the training of the teachers and the operation of the 35 centers across the island. There were ample funds for furnishings and extra trained help as well as supervisors of health, nutrition, and parent guidance. After these centers were well organized, I returned to the States to work in Virginia.

From 1936 to 1938, the children's program in Virginia was a pleasant interlude. I was happy to spend short intervals at home in Washington, visiting our several New York college friends whose husbands had gravitated to Washington and made up the so-called white collar group of the Roosevelt era.

The program in Virginia was well established without the many problems of organization found in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. I spent much time meeting different groups to explain the child development program, and to discuss how methods of guiding young children had changed because of research and studies in child behavior.

Once again in 1938 it was my good fortune to be recalled to expand

the program in the Virgin Islands. Governor Pearson had since left, and Lawrence Cramer, whom I had known years before, was now in charge. Governor Cramer requested my return.

That voyage by ship was almost disastrous. There was a terrific hurricane, and four days after leaving New York the ship was nearer New York than Puerto Rico, my interim stop on the way to the Virgin Islands. Not a very good sailor at my best, my time was spent in my stateroom, where, during the worst part of the storm, the window was battered open and water rushed in. The door opposite the window was open. When the ship tilted one way, the water poured in only to stream out the door taking suitcases and any other loose objects with it. As the ship tilted back the other way, the loose articles returned. I was on the top bunk and when the cases returned, I climbed down and hurled them up on the top bunk and dragged myself up also. On Sunday (we had left New York on the Thursday before), when we were supposed to near San Juan, the steward said, "We are nearer New York than San Juan; our ship is in the middle where two hurricanes meet."

I recall munching on crackers and fruit. The only people moving around were the stewards, who looked in occasionally to see if passengers were all right. Suddenly one morning the lights went off. Pardo, the steward, said "The engines have stopped! Siren has sounded to man the lifeboats! Put on some clothes, I'll be back in a minute to help you to your lifeboat!"

I started weakly to find my clothes which were hanging up; they were soaking wet. I donned a long coat over my nightdress and tried to decide what I wanted to save. Nothing seemed important. Moans and cries from passengers trying to make their way to the boats could be heard. Many of the women with children had been brought up from the lower decks and were lashed to the stair railings for safety.

Soon Pardo returned saying, "The auxiliary engines are running now. The storm seems to be weakening. The danger is over for the present. Get back to bed." Recovering from the shock, I found that the only thing I clutched was a box of soaking wet Kleenex. Lying in the upper bunk again and still holding it, waiting for whatever would happen next, I asked myself why on earth I bypassed my purse, the little chamois bag with money that should have been pinned to my nightdress along with another holding my bits of jewelry. Why was

Kleenex so important? Then I recalled my mother's training years ago. Whenever we started out for school or Sunday school she would ask, "Have you children your handkerchiefs?" In that extreme moment of possibly facing St. Peter, I might crawl or flounder in my bedraggled nightdress up to the Pearly Gates, but I was unconsciously determined to have my nose clean.

The following day was sunny and clear, the storm had subsided. When we were able to go on deck, we found that not one life boat had escaped being battered. They were useless. We were truly grateful for the untiring efforts of the officers and crew. Those who stood duty on the bridge had their hands and wrists tightly bandaged for several days. One sailor remarked that our captain had remained on the bridge most of the time.

After arriving in San Juan and resting a day, waiting for the little ship, the *Catherine*, to take me to St. Thomas, I had an important errand. I recalled that when I had been in Puerto Rico two years before, some unused nursery furniture had been stored in the public works warehouse. This was federal government property, and if it were not being used, I was sure that I might have it for the new centers to be organized in the Virgin Islands. As it turned out, there were things in the warehouse that could be used. That meant I had to appeal to the Governor for permission to take the items.

The Governor's offices were furnished with beautiful old mahogany furniture. There were also termites in those old buildings and furniture. While I sat in one of the old chairs waiting my turn to see the Governor, my attention was drawn to columns of black ants descending from near the ceiling on one side of the room, trailing down across the floor, and aiming for my chair. They probably would move right under the chair, continue up the other wall, and not even touch me, but I was perturbed about it. At the same time I heard a continuous noise of insects somewhere nearby. I watched the march of the ants, and squirmed in the chair, suddenly moving sideways. The legs sprang apart, and I landed on the floor. The clerk remarked, "We wondered when that chair would give way." Anyway, the Governor agreed to my request. On Saturday, the deck of

the *Catherine* was filled with nursery furniture, tables, chairs, shelves, and other materials for the new centers. We were on our way to St. Thomas.

I found many improvements in the Virgin Islands since my 1934 tour. The original nursery centers were still functioning, some of them now housed in new buildings where the families lived. I found other changes, too, which were not so pleasant. We lived in hotels in 1934 on St. Thomas and St. Croix. The rates were low. But now, four years later, the facilities were geared for tourists. Shortly after I arrived, it was announced that hotel rates would go up to $20 a day. Some single officials were managing by renting small apartments. But this was impractical for me because I had to travel a great deal from island to island supervising centers, holding parents meetings, and training teachers. Managing living quarters for myself and preparing food seemed impossible.

I approached my old friend, Governor Cramer, and asked what I could do. He knew the answer immediately.

"Why, I'll call the deaconesses at All Saints Home. They take paying guests, maybe they have a room for you."

"Wait a minute," said I. "My life is too drastic for me to be stuck in a deaconess home and not have any diversion when I have a little leisure."

"Oh surely you've seen Sister Grace, the leader, and Sister Harriett at our reception and cocktail parties. They're lovely girls, you'll have a wonderful time. And Sister Grace is the best cook on the island, and if you're there, Aline (his wife) and I will have a chance to have a decent meal once in a while."

He picked up the phone and called. They could accommodate me. Did I want to come today? At noon that day I walked up to All Saints Home, part of the Anglican Episcopal Church, to make arrangements which were to last for three years. Sister Harriett English was at the door and said, "Hi Cowlesy, come in, lunch is almost ready."

The spacious living room into which Sister Harriett ushered me was restful, yet unique. It was furnished with old mahogany tables, a

secretary, and several rockers and straight chairs. Beside each chair was a stand-up tray, holding articles ready for handwork — infant clothes, wash cloths, and scarves. A basket stood nearby, filled with assorted mending or patching projects. Needles, thimbles, and thread were ready at each place for anyone interested in a bit of activity while visiting or awaiting tea. The officers of visiting ships came for tea and did their share of knitting at times. Suspended on a frame, leaning against one rocker, was a swatch of gold-colored satin upon which a solid embroidered design was begun. Sister Grace was the clever seamstress who made the priest's robes.

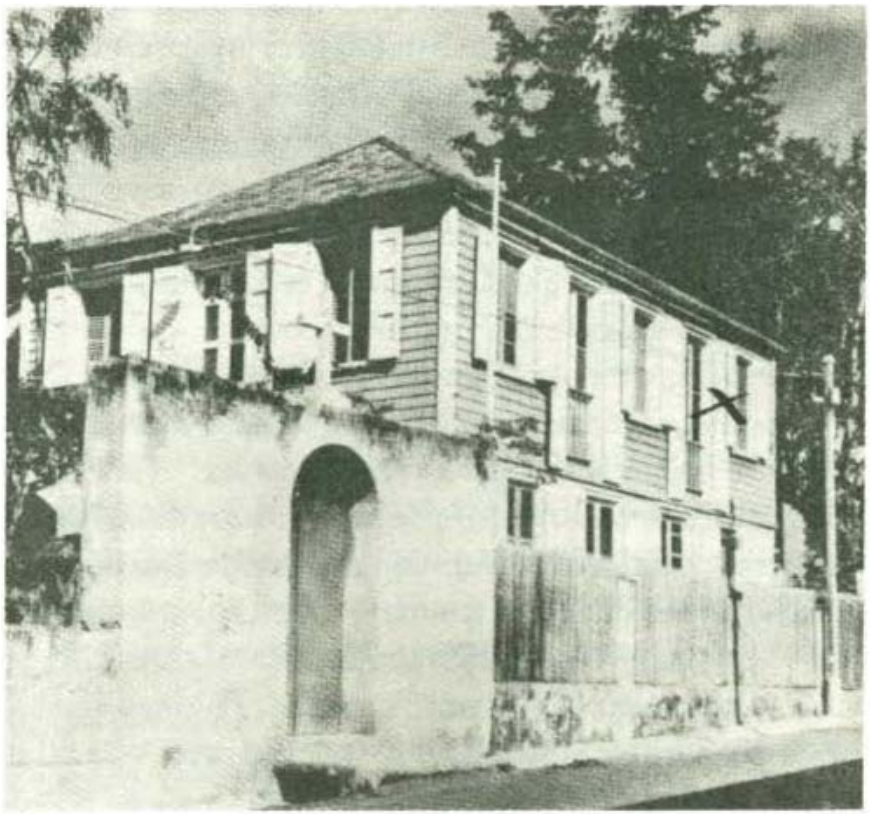
All of this activity was the means by which the work of the parish was accomplished, for an orphanage and almshouse were part of the responsibilities. Sister Grace, a widow from England, guided us with a heavy hand, while Sister Harriett, a former Congregationalist from Connecticut and a Vassar College graduate, assisted her. There was also a small group of young native girls who lived there, went to school, and learned housekeeping in preparation for employment as servants. There were two servants, a cook and a maid; another person came in to do the laundry.

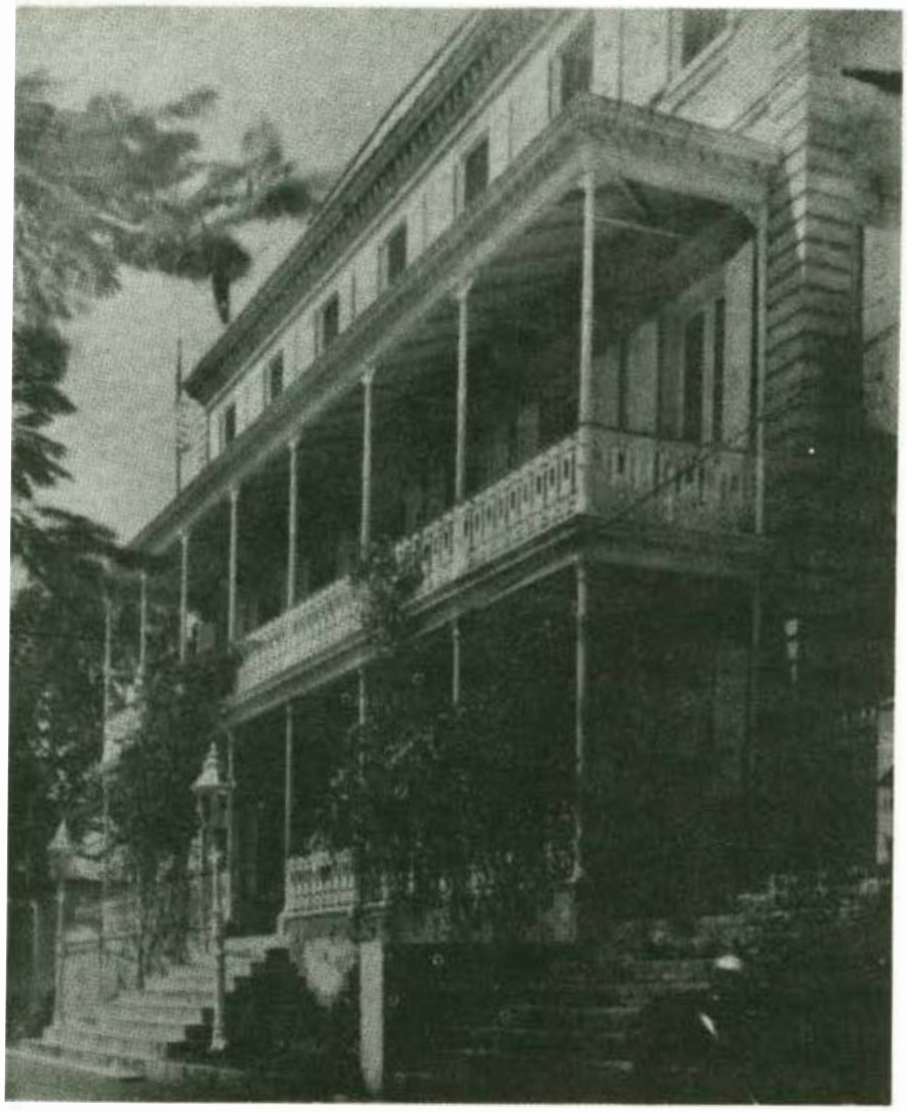
Many visitors from the cruise ships stopped at the home, and whenever the U.S. Navy ships visited the island, a few officers and sailors appeared for tea. Sister Grace entertained numerous guests at dinner, which was a formal occasion. She expected her roomers to dress each evening. Generally the evenings after dinner were spent in a game of bridge. Sister Grace was an avid player. Sometimes I regretted that Sister Harriett and I weren't better players.

There wasn't a dull moment in that establishment. Sister Grace was always eager for a game of badminton, tennis, or volleyball. Sometimes, after trudging up the hill from my office late in the afternoon, eager for a short rest before dinner, Sister Grace would hear me unlatch the gate. "Hi, Cowlesy, you are just in time for a good game of badminton," she would call. Often all of us, including the girls, would drive up the mountain for tea at Drake's Seat and watch the sunset over the bay, or go for a swim at the shore.

The privilege of participating in the daily activities of that Christian home was most rewarding. The steadfast, loving friendship of Sister Grace Smith and Sister Harriett was an anchor for me in times of stress.

Above, *Laurence W. Cramer, governor of the Virgin Islands of the United States during Lea Cowles' second assignment there, from 1938 to 1941.* Below, *the All Saints Home, where Lea Cowles lived. She said of this photograph, "My room has windows marked with 'X.' The other windows in the front are the dining room."*





The Government House at Charlotte Amalie on St. Thomas Island was the home of Governor and Mrs. Cramer.

My first night at All Saints Home is still very vivid in my mind. The household was awakened past midnight by the toll of the bell from the church next door. Voices could be heard. Sister Grace said, "It must be that old Mrs. Perkins has died. We must go. Cowlesy, will you help? Go to the kitchen, and get out all the ice you can; there is a pan there. Harriett and I will be gone the rest of the night."

I hurried down to do her bidding, and after they had departed I turned off the lights and went back to bed. Both deaconesses had gone and would return at breakfast time. I wondered why all the ice. Was there to be a wake? Next day I learned that the ice was used to cool the body, since embalming was not available. By law, bodies had to be buried within a day. The tolling bell alerted persons responsible for the emergency. The carpenter had to be roused and a casket constructed. The cemetery caretaker had to be summoned to dynamite open a grave on the rocky hill. Six men had to be found to carry the remains from the church up the hill to the cemetery. Sometimes the deaconesses had to sew clothes for the deceased. In the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico, processions could often be seen walking miles to a cemetery. Immediately behind the casket marched four men, each carrying a kitchen chair, on which to set the cásket when the pallbearers stopped to rest. I found early in my work that we were dealing with primitive, practical people and should not confuse them with our ways and customs.

One afternoon resting in my room, I overheard Sister Grace preparing a six-year-old Virginia for her first confession. I was interested because it showed what Sister Grace felt about education for children in the early years.

"Virginia come here," she said, "Father Swenson is ready to hear your first confession, and I wish to prepare you."

"I ain't done nothing bad, Deaconess."

"Oh yes you have. First I saw you with the others on the roof throw the cat into the cistern. You know that is our only drinking water and that is sinful."

"He didn't drown, Deaconess. We got him out."

"But it contaminated the water for us all and that is sinful. And when you were sweeping the living room yesterday, I saw you lift the corner of the rug and sweep the dust under it and that is sinful. And you were naughty last night, giggling and laughing when the others wanted to sleep."

Then Sister Grace dismissed her, and with her head bowed low, Virginia slowly made her way to the church. Almost immediately she bounded out of church in high glee, carrying a little pamphlet in one hand and what looked like a lollipop in the other. Her sins had been forgiven?

Later that afternoon, just before dinner, we were sitting on the upstairs terrace overlooking the garden. There seemed to be a procession of the little girls dressed up, carrying some sort of banner. Virginia was pushing a cart with a box on it, the cover of which could be seen moving up and down. As they walked, they mumbled and sang, "In the name of the Father, the Son and in the hole he goes." Suddenly they stopped at a spot in the garden where they had dug a hole. I whispered, "Don't look now, Grace, but I think the cat is being buried alive." Grace gave one yell, "Virginia!" and quickly dispersed the group. The poor child had already started compiling sins for the next time.

One day Sister Grace expected a very important bishop who was visiting the island. She had invited the local priest and the bishop for tea. She also asked a friend, Ralph Brant, who was in charge of some special adult work there, and me to join them. Sister Harriett usually seemed shy when responsible for greeting strangers, so Sister Grace talked to us before she went down to the kitchen to make sure that the food was perfect. She said, "Please, don't disgrace me when the bishop arrives if I'm not upstairs to greet him in time. Now he must be addressed as 'Your Lordship,' and whoever opens the door must welcome him with those words." She went on her way.

Soon we heard footsteps approaching, and the guests were climbing up the front steps. Sister Harriett opened the door shyly, hesitated a moment, raised her arms and said, "Hi, Bishop." Ralph

Brant, who was next in line, reached out his hand and said, "Your Godship, how are you?" just as Grace opened the rear door from the balcony and entered. She marched over to the Bishop and said, "Oh, your Lordship, I knew they would disgrace me, I am so sorry." He and the regular minister of the parish roared with laughter, and the Bishop said, "I haven't had such a good laugh in ages."

I returned to St. Thomas one Friday evening and found that Sister Grace had been called to the island of Tortola for an emergency, leaving Sister Harriett to prepare 60 little boys and girls for their confirmation. Harriett asked at dinner time if I could get up at 4 o'clock the next morning and help her affix veils and arm bands on the girls and boys being confirmed. I agreed and in the darkness next morning, we hastily dressed and made our way next door to the hall where the children were waiting. They were all dressed up, with their eyes shining, and their hair plastered down with sticky, perfumed hair oil. As we turned on the large electric light, hundreds of wasps that had been flying around inside were attracted to the children's perfumed hair. Harriett and I had only washed our faces and hands, so were not affected.

Among that crowd of 60 five-year-olds, not a sound could be heard, while large tears rolled down their cheeks. My job was pinning on the veils, brushing the wasps from underneath, and calming the girls.

The priest appeared and in a loud voice admonished the children, saying, "Boys and girls, this is a sacred occasion. You must stand this as well as you can. It will soon be over. Do not fight the wasps, but stand still."

Finally the children were ready, and solemnly marched toward the church. Harriett went with them, but I trudged home praying that there weren't too many stings. Sister Harriett came in later at breakfast time and said, "Well, Cowlesy, we really did the works, didn't we?"

Cruise ships occasionally came into the port bringing many tourists and a great number of interested people and inspectors from Washington who wanted to see what was happening in the Virgin Islands.

One Saturday morning Mrs. Morris Levitt, wife of the Government Secretary, called to tell me that a cruise ship with some special visitors was arriving. Since Governor and Mrs. Cramer were away in Washington, Secretary Levitt had asked for my help because composer Irving Berlin and his wife were expected for lunch. Even in 1938 the islands were quite primitive. One couldn't just go out to the store on the spur of the moment and buy food for lunch, and in that hot climate, people didn't stock food. Sometimes, one had to go out, catch a chicken, and cut it up to prepare the meal. To make matters worse on that day, Mrs. Levitt's regular cook was ill. So a substitute had to be borrowed. We once more girded our loins for action and went to help.

There were to be eight for lunch. Affairs were progressing well, and the visitors were enjoying a Virgin Islands favorite, a Rum Swizzle, when lunch was announced. The door opened and in came a huge Virgin Islands woman, barefooted, a large flower-bedecked straw hat on her head. She was dressed in a long, red cotton dress, covered with a large white apron. In her mouth she held a clay pipe. Grinning broadly, she held in front of her (by resting it on her stomach) a large platter of chicken and rice, the native food of the Virgin Islands, called chicken and fungi. Mr. Berlin looked and said, "If I only had a camera."

The conversation was lively at lunch. Suddenly, off in the distance, the sounds of native music, the thumping of drums, and the shuffling of people marching up the hill could be heard. The clamor became louder as the crowd approached the Secretary's home. When a Virgin Islands band burst forth, Mr. Levitt said, "I believe, Mr. Berlin, you are being serenaded."

At best a Virgin Islands band is a group of eager men playing at the same time, but not together, on whatever kinds of instruments they could find. Listening carefully, we could just discern the strains of "God Bless America." Mr. Berlin stood up, listened, and asked, "My, did I write that?" He appeared on the balcony where there was great applause. In a most serious and somewhat humble tone he said,

"Friends, of all the honors I have ever received, I value your expression of friendliness the most. I am deeply touched."

As he was speaking, the old, square, out-of-tune piano was pushed to the doorway and he played for the crowd. We were impressed by Mr. Berlin's sincere, gentle, friendly manners. After a while, the group left and the luncheon party went on.

On another occasion, Juan Trujillo, dictator of the Dominican Republic, came into St. Thomas harbor. There was a huge reception for him. All the natives from St. Thomas and even some from St. Croix came to see him and his wonderful yacht. As we were standing in the reception line close to him, one of our wealthy French residents admired the many medals displayed on a wide satin band across his chest. "Oh sir," she said, "where did you get those beautiful medals?" Trujillo stood proudly before her and said, "Madame, I bestowed them upon myself."

Early one afternoon, word came to the island that Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau and his aide were arriving for the evening from Puerto Rico. The Governor's wife, Mrs. Cramer, was expected to entertain them for dinner. The sudden news created some problems because Governor Cramer was absent from the island and his official residence was being redecorated. Mrs. Cramer and her baby, with two servants, were temporarily living in small quarters on the wharf where she had invited me to spend the weekend.

At that particular season of the year, the mosquitos were thick in the wharf area. They tended to settle under chairs and tables. Because no insecticides were handy on that Saturday afternoon, I managed to borrow some smoke coils to help drive off the insects.

The visitors were expected at any moment, so the butler was busy and Mrs. Cramer was upstairs putting the baby to bed. I was left to crawl under the dining room table and light the coils. Because of the dampness at the wharf, I was having difficulty. I let out a loud

expletive, calling to the butler: "George, I can't light these blamed coils," just as the visitors were ushered into the living-dining area.

Secretary Morgenthau lifted the corner of the tablecloth and asked, "May I help a lady in distress?" In a moment, we were both under the table.

Mrs. Cramer was obviously thrown off balance when she arrived in her dining room and found the guest of honor — the United States Secretary of the Treasury — fighting mosquitoes and lighting matches under her table. Her reaction was to say, "Mr. Secretary, please excuse me." Then the humor of the situation overtook us all. The coils were finally lighted and we settled down to dinner.

As 1941 unfolded, the threat of war seemed imminent. United States civilians assigned to special projects in the Virgin Islands were ordered back to the States. The centers were placed in the hands of well-trained Islanders. When I again visited the Virgin Islands in 1945, the centers were still operating and had become a part of the education department.

Three

Alabama Bound

The last of my experiences with a Federal Nursery School Program began in 1941 when I was sent to Alabama. The centers in the state were well organized under the direction of several area supervisors. Because Alabama was a strategic area for the World War II effort, the regulations governing the children's centers were altered to meet the needs of working mothers.

Huntsville, a sleepy little village before the war, grew from a few hundred residents to a population of thousands practically overnight. An arsenal and factories furnishing materials sprang up. Space was required to house 60 to 100 small children while their mothers worked in the factories. I was sent there to help. My first problem was to contact the public land commissioner to find a suitable space where a portable building might be erected and furnished within a few days to care for the children.

On a hot summer afternoon I wended my way through Montgomery to the land commissioner's office where an elderly, baldheaded man with glasses perched on the end of his nose peered at me as I climbed the stairs. "Well, girlie, what can I do for you?" When I told him of my needs, he opened a tome of maps that was nearby, and for a long time we pored over them trying to find a suitable piece of

public land close to the factories. It had to be large enough for a building and some play space near water and sewage systems.

It seemed hopeless. In the heat I became quite exhausted and said, "Mr. Smith, I don't believe we'll ever find a space up there in that crowded area." He stared at me and in most serious tones said, "Girlie, if President Roosevelt and Winston Churchill can be out there in the Atlantic on a destroyer to find places for our boys over in Europe and solve other problems, I guess we can find a few square feet for your little tots." We did.

In a matter of two weeks the cement floor was poured. The Department of Public Works in Montgomery built the sides and the roof, which were to be transported by truck to Huntsville. Dr. Grace Langdon, a former early education professor at Columbia University Teachers College and later national director of Federal Nursery School Programs, was visiting me at that time. She had come down to see the situation in the area. When we heard that the trucks were on their way to Huntsville, we drove toward the site to watch the building go up. On our way we saw the loaded trucks returning. I stopped them to ask what was the trouble. Why weren't the sides and roof delivered? The sides were 18 inches too high to go under the viaduct, we were told, so the drivers had to return to the shop and cut off the excess. Later, after all was in place, we broke a little bottle of milk over the doorway to christen the school building.

While acting as director in Alabama I became acquainted with the pre-school training center at the University. The director, Pauline Wilson, permitted our teachers to observe and receive some training there. She asked me if I would consider joining her staff. The interest in child development and parent education was increasing so that her department was grossly understaffed. I had always hoped, before I had one foot in the grave, to teach in a college. I accepted, leaving the Alabama State Program in good hands in 1943 and joining the Department of Child Development in the School of Home Economics at the University of Alabama. I taught courses in infancy, preschool, adolescence, family relations and nursery school organization. A regular nursery center for three to five-year-old children

provided observation and practice. Mrs. Wilson, with the cooperation of the State Department of Welfare, was able to have two infants visit a few days a week, so that the students from her class might observe and gain experience with them. A full-time laboratory for infants up to two years of age evolved later.

The second floor of the Nursery School building had small rooms perfectly adapted for our infant center. There were two rooms for office space, four rooms for the infants, and a kitchen. Six infants, ranging from under six months to 16 months, were selected from the families of students and faculty. This was the first full-day infant laboratory of its kind in the United States and is still functioning. I supervised the students practicing in the laboratory.

Perhaps this is the time to step aside from my narrative to air a grievance about the education of young children. My training and experiences since 1915 have always been in education, focusing on the education and guidance of parents and their young children. Even at Columbia University Teachers College education began with the five-year-old. The Child Development Institute for the study of children under five years was a divison apart from the rest. I sensed that we students were treading on sacred ground, involving ourselves in something solely parents' business.

But in 1934, the federal government considered its huge nursery school program to be primarily educational and put its administration under state departments of education. The state departments of health and welfare cooperated, but education departments set the pace. In many colleges, pre-school study was put in schools of home economics, taking its place along with clothing, foods, home management, and other subjects. My experience during the 1940s in Alabama was a constant struggle to win support for improving our division and providing services for students majoring in child development. Food and clothing had first priority in the School of Home Economics. The child development department was considered a sort of step-child. Later, through our continuing efforts in the face of insurmountable difficulties, the University's Departments of Education, Psychology, Sociology, and even the

School of Nursing recognized child development's unique significance. Students from those departments took our courses as required study. The child development department expanded greatly and now appears to have equaled, if not surpassed, the other departments in importance.

I know there's a good reason why the study of the poor, benighted infant landed among the food, clothing and home management curricula. But one of my grievances is that the infant with his mother has remained there all these years instead of being relegated where he belongs — in education.

Another complaint is based on the observation that parents in some nursery centers are not considered very important. Parent meetings are just another chore. At a White House Conference which I attended in 1960, I was assigned to a group concerned with parents. The outcome was to be a pamphlet relating to them. The leader said, "To save time and get on with the business, I have already prepared the first statements. It is that we unanimously agree that in any work with children, we must carry the parents along with us." After much discussion pro and con, the statement was not accepted. I walked out of the committee, shaking my head and whispering, "Parents are important. Here's where I came in in the 1920s."

During my 13 years at the University, in addition to the regular teaching, I did some volunteer community service that involved training the staff and supervising a Negro center funded by the local Community Chest. The center cared for children of working mothers. One day I accompanied a representative of the Chest to inspect the center. He especially wanted to check on the eligibility of the children. He was sure that some could be cared for at home and that we were wasting Community Chest funds. As he questioned the names on the register, he suddenly pointed to a little girl nearby: "What about her?" he asked, "Isn't there anyone at home who can take care of her?"

One of our teachers spoke up. "Sir," she said, "I am one of the teachers here and the sole support of my family. That little girl is mine. I pay some for her. My mother is at home, but she is 80 years

old, blind and crippled. She is unable to care for her." With that the visitor threw the register on the desk, picked up his hat, and said, "You win, I'm sick of this. Let me out of here." Incidentally, the Chest gave the center increased funds to operate the next year.

In the summer of 1980, I returned to Alabama for a visit. There were very few close friends still there. During breakfast in the hotel dining room one morning I remarked to a friend, "Oh dear, I'm so lonely. How I'd love to see just one person who knows me." My friend said, "There's a man you may remember. You worked with him at the Community Chest. Shall I ask him to come over and have coffee with us?" I glanced over to see the representative who had been checking on the children. Knowing his feelings, we chuckled, and decided to "just skip it."

During our early years in New York City, my husband and I had been summertime "babysitters" of a lovely six-room apartment on Central Park West owned by Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Phelan. Mrs. Phelan often remarked that when she passed away, my name was on one of her pieces of heirloom jewelry. On my way home to Canandaigua in 1946 to spend Christmas, I stopped in New York to have dinner with the Phelans. As we sat reminiscing, waiting for the taxi to take me to the train, Mr. Phelan said to his wife, "Baby, isn't it time for you to give her the legacy you promised her?" He pulled over her heavy jewel box, and Mrs. Phelan displayed her gorgeous rings, bracelets, brooches, watches studded with diamonds, and precious stones. I was speechless to think of selecting one. As Mr. Phelan handled different pieces she said, "I want you to have any one you want." No one had ever given me such an opportunity, and not knowing the comparative value of any, I was most hesitant to choose.

Time passed as she told me tales of special rings or bracelets. Then suddenly from out of the bottom of the box, she picked out a small package carefully wrapped in tissue. Mrs. Phelan sighed and said, "Lea, all these years, I have saved this for you — my favorite piece of all times. It holds such beautiful memories."

Ah, at last my legacy, what was it? As I carefully unwrapped it and held it up, Mr. Phelan called excitedly, holding my coat, "Come,

the taxi is here, you must hurry." I gasped, wrapped it up again, and thanked her.

The next day in Canandaigua my family and others were gathered before the fireplace. It was cold. I was wearing the same clothes in which I had traveled. Someone suddenly asked me for an exciting experience, and feeling the tissue package in my pocket, I remarked that I had just been presented a legacy from my wealthy friends in New York. After relating the tale, I brought forth a brown seed belt from the self-help cooperative in the Virgin Islands, its value about 19 cents. My first legacy!

I never saw the Phelans again, but that incident taught me two things: if you have something to share, do it while people are young enough to enjoy it; and whatever article sets the heart strings humming, share it for others to enjoy. The monetary value is unimportant.

Anyone who has spent many years in the education field is aware of the cycle of philosophies concerning education. Out of those experiences we come to a conclusion about our own philosophy. In the early 1920s, spanking children was not frowned on. Then came a time when we reasoned with them. Later we stressed loving them, following by "loving, yes, but we do not like what you children do." Next came permissiveness with very little guidance. But people didn't realize that there is a word *permit* in permissiveness. It suggests that within limits a child is allowed certain freedom. Children need limits for their own protection.

In the late 1940s, I observed a great emphasis being placed on research and committee work at Alabama. The regular teaching load, including laboratory practices for students, was heavy in the School of Home Economics. I found myself overwhelmed with this extra work.

One afternoon the Dean held a committee meeting with four of us, representing Foods, Clothing, Child Development and Home

Economics. This was to be a final effort to decide upon a core curriculum for faculty approval. There had been several discussions, all indecisive. After three hours without agreement, it was getting late. We were all exhausted and eager to leave. Suddenly, one specialist said, "Dean, you know I have to leave tomorrow for my meeting in Dallas, so excuse me." Another colleague said, "Well, we can't come to a decision and you know I'm leaving tomorrow also for Washington, so please excuse me," and she left. The third professor said, "Why can't those people agree and help us accomplish this important business? Here we've wasted another day of indecision."

I was sorry also, but just then I was feeling a cold coming on, and all I wanted was to get home, have some hot milk toast, don my woolly pajamas and put myself to bed in order to be ready for the next day. The Dean, disappointed and somewhat sad, said, "Let me tell you something. One of our colleagues is a very important member of an organization meeting in Dallas. The other has to go to Washington because she is being sued by the bottling companies for saying that soft drinks are of little nutritional value and therefore should not be allowed in the public schools. Both of these professors are very important people. So we'll try again later."

Late that same night after I had doctored myself and gone to sleep, the telephone rang. Rousing myself and creeping shiveringly to the telephone, I caught a glimpse in the mirror of myself swathed in a towel wrapped around my throat. I was bleary-eyed and wheezing, looking for all the world like the fictional Maggie Scratch.

It was the Dean. "My dear, I've been thinking about our meeting," she said. "You looked so weary after teaching your big classes all day I wanted to tell you that you are a very important person, too. I didn't mean to hurt you."

Bless her! If she could only have seen me at that moment, she would gladly have bundled this benighted Yankee home to New York State. I answered, "Oh, Dean, think nothing of it. Go on to bed. Things will work out. All I want is to do an acceptable job of teaching for you." Honestly, I don't recall that the core curriculum was ever finished.

Having been a widow for several years, in 1953, I married Dr. John Masters, a widower and a law professor at the University. He retired in 1954, but died during the next year. In 1962, tired of committees and satisfied with a full and interesting professional life, I decided to resign. But I was soon to discover that my retirement was short lived.

Four

An Educational United Nations

By 1947, when Lea Masters went to work for the United Nations, the post-war world had already betrayed some of the earlier promise of peaceful relations among the allied forces. The Cold War had already begun. The Allies had confronted issues such as Iran, a peace settlement for Germany, and atomic secrecy, but failed to reach agreement. During these years, Europe was being divided between east and west, and this was a price that had to be paid for the failure of diplomacy. In contrast, the earlier establishment of the United Nations had brought great hope to a wartorn world.

As the Second World War was drawing to a close, the soon-to-be-victorious Allies had agreed on the necessity for establishing an international security organization. Under the Moscow Pact Declaration of November 1943, they had committed themselves to that idea in principle, but the specific structure, function, and location of the organization had yet to be determined. With the unfailing support of the American Secretary of State, Cordell Hull, meetings were held in August 1944 at Dunbarton Oaks, a beautiful Washington, D.C. mansion owned by Harvard University, to draft proposals for the replacement of the League of Nations.

The Dunbarton Oaks Proposals further committed the Allies to the creation of the United Nations, which was to have a multipurpose function involving concern for both economic and social cooperation. Moreover, the

new organization, unlike the League of Nations, was to have peace and security as its primary objective. Following further discussions at Yalta in February 1945, the United States issued a call for a general conference to be held in San Francisco in April. This meeting, which involved very real debate on the remaining questions and included representatives from more than 50 nations, produced the United Nations Charter. Finally, the organization had defined its purposes, its agencies, and its structure; all that remained was to find a permanent home.

Many cities offered themselves to the United Nations as a permanent site, and by the spring of 1946, it was decided that New York City would serve well, and the General Assembly and the Security Council had their first New York meetings in April. Growing quickly, the United Nations administrative agencies were soon scattered across the city, including such distant areas as Flushing Meadow and Lake Success, and the need for a more central location was obvious. Within a year, the Rockefeller family had purchased and then offered to the United Nations a piece of urban slum on the East River, Turtle Bay, which was accepted, and six years later the permanent home, the United Nations Building, was completed.

Some of the excitement of these early years, as well as the hopes and problems of the time, are clearly part of the following chapter. Lea Masters, who had the responsibility for establishing the nursery program that then grew and became the United Nations School, remembers the time with great fondness.

Dr. Kenneth P. O'Brien
Assistant Professor of History
SUNY College at Brockport

Before describing some of my "retirement" experiences, I would like to backtrack a bit to tell about a memorable time that took place in the middle of my tenure at the University of Alabama. In 1947 I was asked by members of the Secretariat of the United Nations at Lake Success in New York to set up a center for 26 children under five whose families were part of the UN's international staff. The fact that the children represented seven nationalities and spoke five different languages was only part of the intriguing challenge. The University granted me a leave of absence and I was on my way.

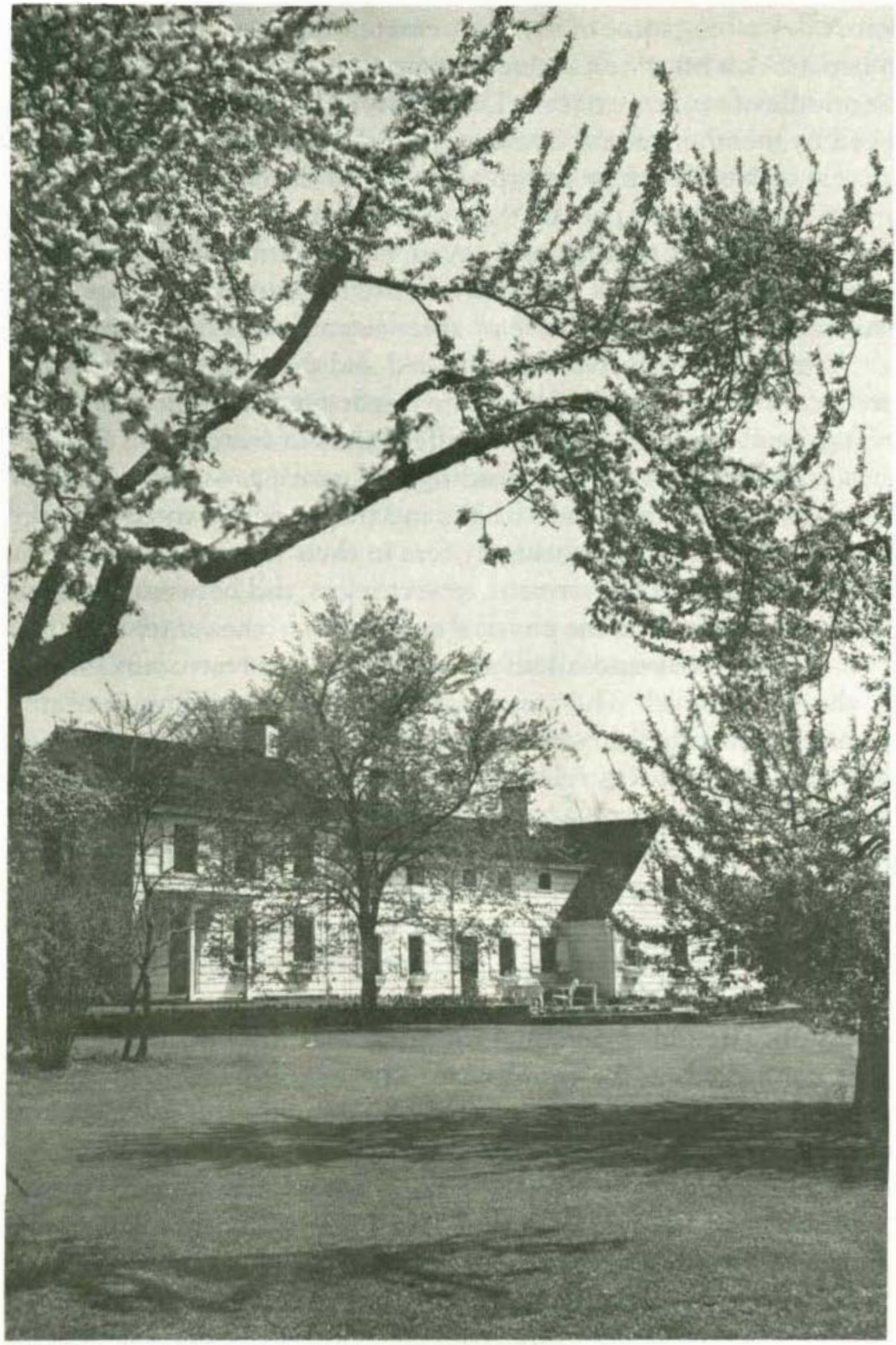
The center was privately organized and therefore not under the direct control of the New York State Department of Education. This arrangement made it possible to offer kinds of instruction for pre-school children — such as reading and writing — not normally available. The children were bright and the parents wanted to make sure that they didn't fall behind peers in their home countries.

The education department, nevertheless, did occasionally send inspectors to check on the physical conditions of the center building. It was a small story-and-a-half structure with the restrooms located on the upper level. The inspectors found the building "unsafe" because no outside fire escape existed from the second level for small children. The UN was reluctant to mar the building's appearance with a fire escape. It was a lovely old farmhouse set on a lawn under spreading apple trees. Furthermore, the UN fire department, which provided 24-hour service, was located right next door. We finally managed to get around these bureaucratic snags.

The UN provided service personnel for the house including a gardener who kept the lawn, shrubs, and flowers in wonderful condition. An added personal incentive was my own small apartment connected to the farmhouse. The educational program was financed by the parents who selected representatives of five nationalities to oversee the activities. As it turned out, the center proved to be the beginning of the United Nations School. Grades were gradually added and the school is now in a $1.5 million home near the United Nations building in New York City.

It was an exciting challenge for all of us involved. I have often wondered who learned more from this everyday living together — the teachers or the children.

The children played together surprisingly well and were most



The United Nations School at Lake Success, New York, was described by Lea Cowles as "A lovely old farmhouse set on a lawn under spreading apple trees."

thoughtful of one another. Sham Ros, the son of an Indian father and British mother, assumed responsibility for showing each new child around the school. One day we overheard Sham telling a new Chinese boy, as he held his hand at the top of the stairs, "You must hold on tightly when you go down, for there might not be a mama at the bottom when you fall."

When it came to languages, the children seemed to find their own ways very nicely. Some children knew two languages: English and French, English and Spanish, or English and Chinese. One five-year-old knew English, French, and Chinese fluently. I asked her to help interpret and she was particularly helpful with a Chinese boy who spoke only his native language. One day I noticed the Chinese boy swinging in the yard when all the others were ready for lunch. I asked our trilingual interpreter to explain to the boy what was happening. She willingly complied, but remarked, "He is silly. Why doesn't he learn English."

One morning two children, one French and the other Swedish, were busily playing in the block corner. They were carrying on a lively conversation, each in his own language. A teacher remarked, "John, I didn't know you understood French." He replied, "Oh, I don't, but I understand Pierre."

Everyone was interested in Florence Wu's five undershirts. Each morning during the winter, the children ran to the door to greet her and hear her say, "My papa, she say if it is warmer this noon, take off three shirts." Some days we counted a muslin, a flannel, a wool, a knitted, and a linen shirt under her dress. Florence never missed a day; she was always well. Some of the other children, who wore only one heavy garment, were continually becoming overheated or cold as they took the garment off and put it back on.

Miss Marie, a well-trained Russian teacher, was exceptional as an artist and as a disciplinarian. Since this was the United Nations, she related her activities with the children to UN procedures. Whenever

something needed attention she would say, "Children, we must have a meeting." It was repeated in Chinese, French, and Spanish. The children would come and sit in a group while Marie held forth.

In many instances it was to ask their help in keeping away from the area where Mr. Turkington, the gardener, had planted flowers used in the dining rooms and offices at the United Nations. Sometimes when they had to go to the health department in the main building, she would stop them at the door and they would have a meeting. This was the big people's building, she explained, and they discussed how they were going to walk from the door to the health department quietly.

Whenever there was a crisis, they had a meeting. During the hot summer, there was a spell of grasshoppers on the plants, eating the leaves and spoiling them. Marie called a meeting. "Mr. Turkington needs helpers to catch the grasshoppers. He will give each of you a jar with a cover so you can catch them. He will collect the jars in the afternoon and get rid of the grasshoppers." This busy activity went on a few days until one day the children themselves had a meeting. At noon when they had gathered lots of the insects, they congregated at one end of the fenced yard, opened the jars, and released the bugs over the other side. When Mr. Turkington inquired about the jars, Sham Ros, the Indian boy, said, "We collected lots of them and we took care of them for you. We opened the jars and threw them away over the fence because, you see, we do not take life."

One day, an Indian, with his two-and-a-half-year-old daughter, appeared at the door. He had just arrived at the UN, his wife was in the hospital with a new baby, and the maid had failed to appear to care for his daughter. He was distraught because he was due at a meeting. I accepted the child and nursed her all day, trying to comfort her, feed her, and help her to sleep. I kept her in my room and put her on my bed to rest.

Later in the afternoon, an assistant helping me looked at the child nestling close on my shoulder near my neck and remarked, "Have you looked in Rosieta's hair. There are nits there."

"Lordy, Lordy," I exclaimed, "I held her and put her on my

bed. What if there was anything alive crawling around?"

It was almost time for the father to appear. What could I say? One had to be most diplomatic and not offend anyone. In the note I gave the father, I suggested that he might examine her because she seemed to be irritated near the back of her hair and neck.

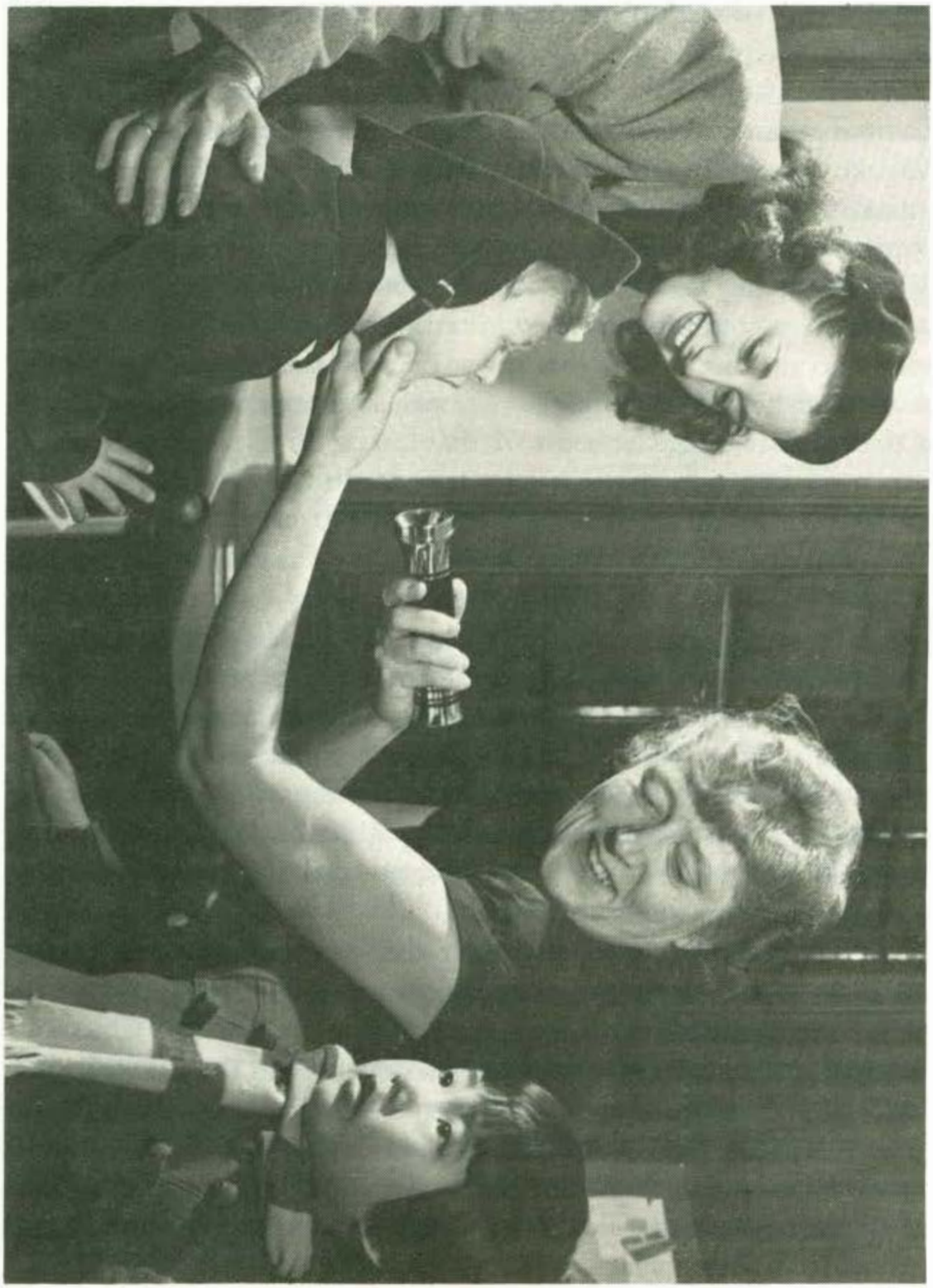
At 10 that evening the father called and apologized for the situation. The family would treat her, he explained, but he wanted us to know that the family did not believe in taking life. She appeared next day and all was well.

We had visitors every once in a while — important people who came to see what was happening. Several times Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt and Madame Pandit Nehru would wander over at noon to eat a little fruit in the yard and watch the children. One day Dr. Grace Langdon told me that she was bringing some very important people, so I talked to the children early in the morning. They were busy finger-painting in the front hall and I said, "Children, we are having some very special visitors today, and I know that you will be sweet and friendly and show them what you've been doing." Little Florence Wu said, "Oh yes, we will do that."

Later I saw these visitors coming. Florence also saw them, so with hands and arms covered with finger paint, she ran to the door, opened it and said, "Are you the special visitors Mrs. Cowles said we must be sweet to?" They didn't quite understand her high-pitched voice, but said, "Isn't she cute!" They laughed as Florence clasped them about the legs with her finger-paint-covered hands and arms. I hoped that the flour paste had already dried.

The parents committee at the school was very active. Whenever there was any question of spending money for a piece of equipment or for any special trip, they would discuss it and vote. I observed that the Russian and Chinese parents always abstained just as in the UN. But there was usually a majority of affirmative votes, so our children's needs were supplied.

With the students of the United Nations School are Lea Cowles and Chester Bowles, whose career in government service included an appointment in 1947 as international chairman of the fund-raising campaign for the United Nations Appeal for Children. Also in 1947, Bowles served as special consultant to U.N. Secretary General Trygve Lie.



The United Nations Department of Public Information issued this photograph with caption: "United Nations Nursery School—'Show us your tongue, Pierre'—Health is of prime concern in the United Nations Nursery School. All newcomers must undergo a throat inspection by the director, Mrs. Lea Cowles. Here, little Pierre Deletre of France, with mother beside him, stands with his mouth wide open, while Mrs. Cowles tells Florence Wu of China, who has already had her examination, to go out and play."

On one occasion, the parents had discussed purchasing some climbing equipment for the older children in the play yard. I was aware that when it came to a vote on the purchase, the Russian and Chinese parents would abstain. The committee consisted of a Chinese, an American, an English, a French and a Russian member. I remarked to one of the parents, "I know that the Russian and Chinese fathers wanted that climbing eqiupment. They spoke for it. Why didn't they vote for it?" The person said, "Do you know what happens in a committee at the United Nations? Usually they are the ones who abstain. I think that it was because they do not want to be listed, even here, as approving unanimously something that might be to their disadvantage later on."

For days before Christmas, the children had been preparing for the event. The teachers were helping them make gifts, string decorations for the tree, learn songs of the different countries, and hear stories of Christmas. They had been told that a day or so before their party, someone would leave a tree out in front for them. The janitor would fashion a standard so it would stand up. It would be trimmed and the gifts arranged underneath. The children expected to do it all themselves, with some supervisory help.

I was responsible for the older children. Late one afternoon a day or so before Christmas a light snow was falling and it was getting dark. Two of the older boys were looking out the window when a car stopped in front and deposited a five-foot tree in the snow. Laddy, our Argentine, shouted, "Oh, the tree!" With that, bedlam broke loose. The children rushed to the windows to see. I said, "Wait. Get your chairs, sit down, then we'll talk about it." But Laddy had disappeared into the cloakroom with two other boys, and came rushing out with his lariat heading for the door.

I was watching over the younger children at that moment and could only call for Laddy to stop. Out the door the three rushed, Laddy whirling his lariat ready to lasso the tree. Before I could do anything, the tree was pulled into the room. One little Chinese boy insisted on clambering all over it. I caught hold of his belt with one

hand and pulled him away, while trying to stand the tree up in the corner with the other.

Suddenly the noise subsided; Laddy and the boys had left the room. Eva, Renise and Bannebi gazed out of the window. Bannebi was saying "Pere Noel"; Renise, an American, replied, "No, no Santa Claus." I heard the wistful voice of Eva, "The Christians are coming." It may have been Christmas but the Christians seemed more appropriate to me at that moment than Kris Kringle or Santa Claus. I kept saying, "Children, we must sit down, Christmas doesn't come this way."

The boys reappeared, having gathered as many gifts as they could. Seeing me trying to hold up the tree and keep Waug out of the way, did they reverently lay their gifts under the tree? No. They shouted, "Gifties for the parents," hurled them under the tree and went back for more. There were clay paper weights, ash trays, and other small articles, some of which had not been fired. I shuddered and once more called, "Christmas doesn't come this way!"

The boys and girls had now gathered the strings of popcorn and cranberries for the trimming. Strains of French noels could be heard coming from the group next door — and above it all, my loud voice trying to gain their attention. In a pleading tone, I said, "Children, we must have a meeting and talk about it. Christmas doesn't come this way." The door opened into the French teacher's room. She stuck her head in smiling and said, "Sez you!"

When the center was well organized, I returned to the University of Alabama. The UN children's center was left in the hands of a new director. The memories of that year would last me a lifetime!

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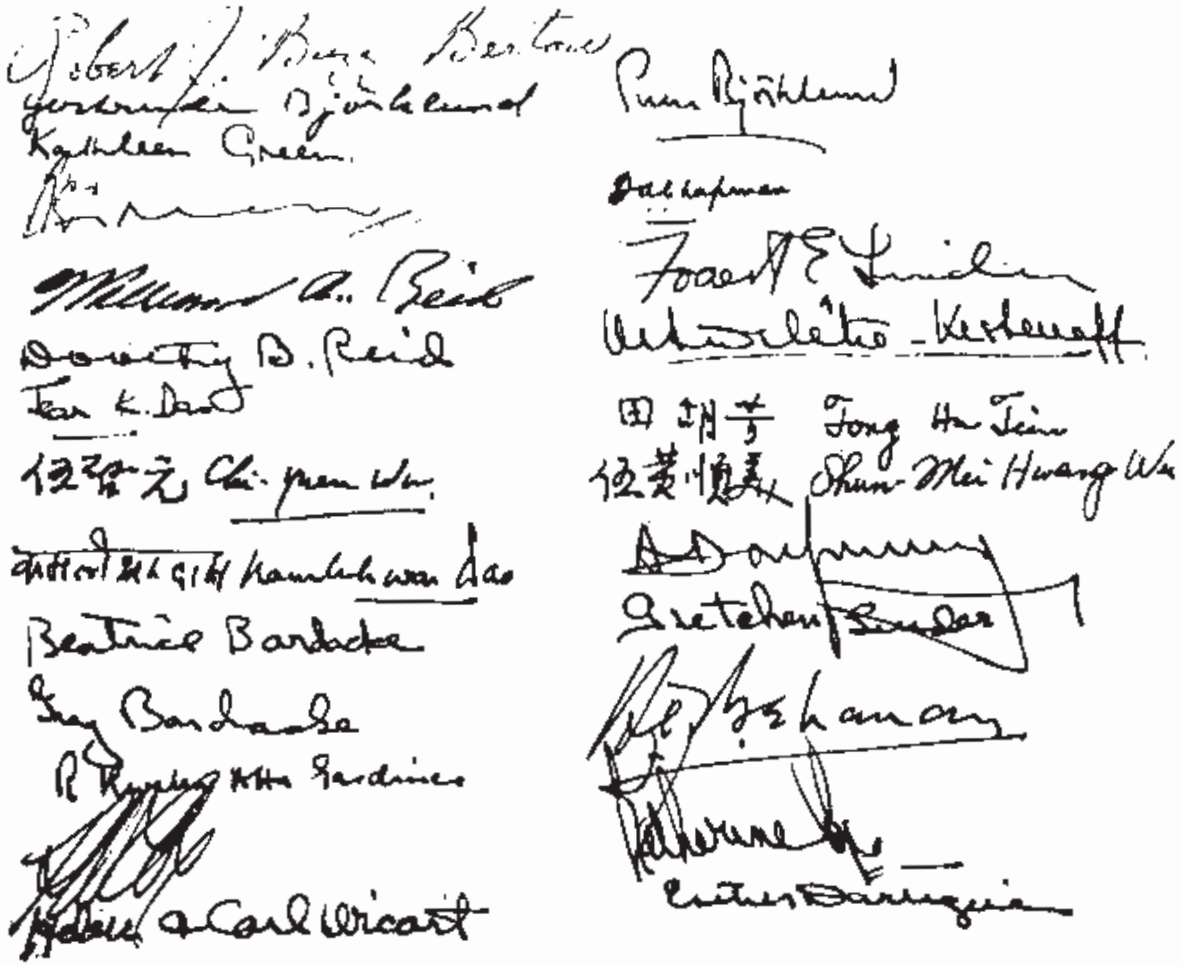
REFERENCE:

TO MRS COWLES

It is just not possible to put into words the love and appreciation that fill our hearts. The School will have other Directors, but no one else will ever quite take the place of our Mrs. Cowles.



Lea Cowles received this letter upon her leaving the United Nations School to return to the University of Alabama.

Chapter Five

Among the Papagos

The Papagos, meaning "People of the Desert," are the Indians who inhabit a fairly large reserved land area in Arizona. The first 90 years of the Reservation's history were marked by economic and educational neglect. Pre-school children and their parents were completely ignored until the advent of President Lyndon Johnson's "Great Society," when the program described by Mrs. Masters in this chapter was among the efforts made to change the situation.

Relations between the federal government and the Papagos date from July 1, 1874, when an Executive Order established the Reservation adjoining Tucson, Arizona, and the nearby Missions San Xavier del Bac. That order was the first in a series of actions affecting Indians throughout the United States as well as the Papagos in particular. Under the authority of a 1937 order, the Papago Tribal Council began to function as a political organization standing between the federal government and the individual Indian citizen. The final result was the development of the situation existing today whereby the Indians living on reservations are subject to both federal and local governmental authority established both by Executive Orders and Congressional Acts.

The main Papago Reservation stretches some 90 miles across Pima County, Arizona, from Tucson westward and from the Mexican border north to about 10 miles south of Casa Grande with headquarters at Sells. It is divided into 11 districts: Baboquivari, Chukut Kuk, Gu Achi, Gu Vo, Hickiwan, Pisin mo, Schuk Toak, Sif Oidak, Sells, and two geographi-

cally separate districts, Gila Bend and San Xavier. District councils are self-governing in local matters, while a Tribal Council governs matters of concern to the tribe as a whole. In both cases the procedure is completely democratic in nature. It is interesting to note the committees which function under the auspices of the Tribal Council: Education, Health, a Housing Authority, Legal, Mining (many copper ore deposits are on the reserved lands), and Rodeo. The last may sound strange to persons unfamiliar with the area, but the annual Sells Indian Rodeo is an event of great social and economic importance. Law enforcement is a joint federal-local undertaking, and an officer of the Tribal Council is the chief of police.

As the Tribal Council began to function it proved to be an important political entity serving to help the Indians, in an environment which was in many ways hostile. Strong pressure was exerted on the Indians to Anglicize their behavior; the federal bureaucracy was too often staffed by personnel who were autocratic and unsympathetic toward the very people they were to serve. Most of the bureaucrats assumed that what was good for Anglos was good for Indians, and too often orders came from Washington issued by agents with little or no first-hand information gathered on the scene.

The economic conditions of the Papago lands are perennially precarious. A desert climate, poor roads, scarce water, relatively primitive irrigation methods, scarcity of machinery, lack of education and remoteness of many parts of the Reservation all combine to produce a subsistent level of living for large numbers of the residents. As time passed after World War II more Papagos sought employment outside the Reservation. This was especially true in the San Xavier district where many were able to find work in Tucson. Today this district has the largest percentage of wage earners. Sells has many wage earners as well, primarily because its role as headquarters provides several government-related jobs. Finally, a large number of the total population receive unearned income as welfare recipients and therefore are not in the labor force.

Just as the level of economic well-being has been low, the same has been true of education. Geographic isolation, poor transportation, and lack of funds have meant that many children have received little or no formal education. Indeed, not until 1971 was a high school opened on the Reservation.

A Baptist minister, Robert C. Mackett, was elected chairman of the Tribal Council in 1965, 1966 and 1967; during the same period, Thomas Segundo, a highly respected and capable leader, was director of the

Community Action Program for the tribe. These men, especially Segundo, were active and successful in procuring money and support for a variety of programs. It was with these two men that Mrs. Masters worked to establish her mother and child program.

Dr. Arthur M. Lee
Professor Emeritus of History
SUNY College at Brockport

From 1965 to 1968, I directed a special new project for the Papago Indians in Arizona. This was a unique program, which took many months to plan and put into place. Its origins went back nearly two years. During the summer of 1963, I visited Dr. Grace Langdon, my friend since our days at Columbia University Teachers College, at her home in Tempe, Arizona. She was collaborating with Dr. Irving Stout at Arizona State University on a project involving the Papago Indians who lived in the state. Under their direction a group of Papago students were visiting each village on the Papago Reservation to survey young families about government-supported projects. The results of the Reservation survey showed the need for a center where young parents could learn about helping their children, including health, nutritional, and educational guidance. The mothers needed a place to learn about sewing, laundering, and preparing nutritious food for their children.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs, which already had a nutritionist and general instructor who visited the villagers, wanted to cooperate and supported centers for instruction and child care. The program which was developed set forth the number of centers; the number of people to be benefited; the number of children to be accommodated; the number of Papagos to be hired and trained; the possibility of securing a trained person to undertake the program; and the analysis of costs. Late in 1963, a request for funds to implement the program was sent to Washington.

Then came the exasperating period of waiting. After being put off many times, the tribal chairman, Robert Mackett, decided to visit Washington himself. Mr. Mackett was a huge man, and the arms of the plane seat had to be removed to accommodate him. After his arrival in Washington, he found the proper office. It is said that he stood silently in the doorway, then in a very low voice said, "I have come from the Papago Reservation in Arizona to locate the persons who have charge of auditing our request for a program, and to find out why we have heard nothing from them."

Suddenly a person with a pile of projects on his desk, drew one out and said, "I have it here. Every once in a while, I take it out and read it and put it back. I can't find anywhere that you promised to integrate. Now I don't mean the Negroes, I mean the Chinese and the Japanese."

There was dead silence. Mr. Mackett wiped his brow, drew himself up tall and said, "Well, to my knowledge, we have one Mexican family living on our reservation. But we will do our best." Shortly afterward we heard that the $65,000 program had been approved, and in 1965 I was asked to conduct this pilot parent-child program for the Papago Indians. At that time it was the only project of its kind in the United States.

If I had been a "gal" who could say "no" to anything involving children, I might have been spared the grueling tasks that ensued. But no, I had to jump in with both feet and once more direct this program. The person who helped me with this project was Thomas Segundo, a Papago educated in the North. He was an assistant to the tribal chairman, Mr. Mackett, in carrying out projects for the Papagos. From him I learned untiring patience and the manner in which the Papagos carry on business.

The Papagos are a gentle, easy-going people unaffected by time. Deliberate in their actions and in making decisions, they have endless patience. Papago villages are small, consisting of three or four houses inhabited by the father, mother, children, and the older sons and their wives and children. If a daughter marries, she is expected to go with her husband to his parents' village. The older members of the village group tend to govern. The Papagos live in the most closely knit, affectionate family groups I have ever worked with.

The Reservation is made up of 11 districts, governed by the older men of the district. Two from each are chosen for the large tribal council which controls the affairs of the Reservation and elects a chief. Each district has its own council. Whenever they have any problem, they discuss it, then vote. The decision must be unanimous. Before I was permitted to organize any center on the Reservation, Mr. Segundo and I met with each district council involved to explain what the program offered, decide whether they wanted a center, where it might be located, who would be employed, and everything concerned with it.

The first district meeting was held in the evening in the village of Santa Rosa several miles away from our headquarters at Sells. The new tribal building was filled with interested members, men, women and children, some of them coming from villages quite a distance away. The meeting began at 8.

We started by reminding the members of the survey, the request to Washington for funds, and the amount allocated for the program. With Mr. Segundo interpreting, I described what the center would offer: a full-day program for children from three to five years of age, and training for parents in sewing, health care, food, nutrition, and woodworking. Time was allowed for each adult to express his feelings and ask questions. There was much discussion about who would be hired, the use of the building, about transporting children from outlying areas, and what was expected of the parents or the tribe.

At long last they were prepared to vote. It was getting near midnight and when Mr. Segundo told me that they were going to vote, I said, "Oh goody, now we can soon go home." But no; this first vote was to decide whether they wanted to vote that night or not, and it had to be unanimous. It was. Then there must be time for each one to say whether they approved or not, and each one took his turn. There was dead silence, no shuffling of feet or stirring around, no getting up or going out for water, no sound except the low tones of a speaker. It seemed to me as if almost everyone, including myself was falling asleep. Finally, an elderly man sitting near the door stood up saying, "It is late, I am a long way from home, and I must walk. It is time to vote." When the tribal leader spoke up and said, "All those in favor of having the center," every hand went up. It was unanimous.

I whispered to Mr. Segundo, "Oh, this is fine, now we can go pretty soon." "Oh no," he replied, "we must stand up and shake hands with everyone and thank them for deciding to have it. Then we'll be ready to go home." It was finally 3 a.m. before we shook hands with everyone, promising to set up the facility as soon as possible. I might say that they were very slow and hesitant in making a unanimous decision, but when it came to our part, they gave us to feel it must be completed within the next week.

As time went on and one center after another was organized and put into operation, word came to the Reservation that Sargent Shriver with some other very important persons from Washington, D.C., was flying into Santa Rosa on an inspection tour. There were few telephones, so messages were somehow conveyed by word-of-mouth throughout the Reservation. Within a few hours, hundreds of natives in trucks, wagons, and on horseback congregated at the tribal building in Santa Rosa where we had our parent-child center. At each center we had teachers trained in childhood education at Tucson who assisted in training the Papago staff. One of our teachers was a Negro. When the Washington visitors arrived Chairman Mackett called out lustily to the teacher, "Come on out in front, Josey, and show Sargent Shriver that we integrate."

Tom Segundo and another Papago aide usually accompanied me to the evening local council meetings. In each case I had already covered a full day of supervising, so was somewhat weary before we started out. Some villagers were miles away, and Mr. Segundo, intensely proud of his Papago heritage, would regale us with the history of the region, his voice droning *ad infinitum*. I would try to listen, take note of the route, and review my responsibility at the meeting without letting my attention wander to admire the beautiful scenery and the evening shadows.

Sensing my distractions, Mr. Segundo would stop talking and then say, "Oh, Mrs. Masters, here I've been telling you about our history. You are so absorbed in mountains and scenery that you haven't heard a word I've said." I knew he was hurt, but he didn't stop and relax.

Upon our return from a particular trip, I sat at my desk, exhausted from the strenuous day's accomplishment. With a hand on either side of my head, I closed my eyes and prayed, "Just give me strength." One of my colleagues sensed the trouble, and after a question or two he said, "Oh, don't let it bother you. Mr. Segundo is

so impressed with the background that the foreground goes underground."

Some incidents illustrate the problems and limitations encountered in guiding a group of people with different practices. But my experience in the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico prepared me for the deliberate habits of the Papagos. After the center at Santa Rosa had been well established, for example, I observed that the tribal building was used continually for evening meetings, potluck suppers, and all sorts of entertainment for the older people, as well as the daily program for the children. There was no place to store the children's furnishings.

One day while passing the Bureau of Indian Affairs maintenance yard in Sells, I noticed two large vans, apparently empty. An attempt to find the manager of the yard failed. I explained the need for storage to the head of the Indian Affairs Office, and asked if one of the vans might be taken to Santa Rosa and placed near the rear door of the tribal building to store the center's things. Of course, he said, if it was available, it could be taken at once.

Weeks went by, but no van appeared. One morning a worker entered our office, looked around to ask, "Where's that woman who wants the van up at Santa Rosa? We're going to take it up tomorrow early and we're ready to roll." Immediately I was overjoyed. At last we were going to have a van for storage. At that minute, Mr. Segundo appeared out of his office and told me "Wait a minute. Mr. Fuentes, the manager of the yard, was insulted that you went over his head and asked for the van. He has charge of things in that yard, and his feelings are hurt. Anyway, we must approach the tribe at Santa Rosa and ask if they want the van on their grounds, and when they want it. We must meet with them and have another meeting, then we will let you know when to take it up." I sighed, "Oh dear, it means another endless meeting, and a unanimous decision on where to put it if they'll even let us have it."

So once more we met with the council. It was finally decided, but the council wouldn't agree to have the van close to the building. The members wanted it parked about 25 feet away, meaning the

furnishings had to be carried out at the end of the day and brought back in place for the children the next morning. This involved tables, chairs, cots, shelves, and toys. No one complained; the children were delighted to use the van for play because it was like a large trailer. Thereafter, when a project was ready to be launched, we would look at each other and say, "Ready to roll!"

There were ample funds to set up well-equipped centers, not only for the children, but also for the parents. The Bureau of Indian Affairs had supervisors who cooperated with me and helped in the training. Some mothers wanted to learn to launder properly. Using older washing machines with wringers, a supervisor at the center in Sells demonstrated the techniques. She taught the mothers to sort their clothes, then wash the white things first followed by light clothing and finishing with men's work clothes and heavier things.

Passing the Sells center one day, I saw a mother drive in from the country with a big load of laundry. This was not unusual because water was not always readily available and had to be carried to the homes from distant cisterns. She proceeded to launder her things. A little later I noticed that the first line of laundry had some light things, underwear, and work clothes of the husband. It had not been sorted as the supervisor, Miss Sullivan, had suggested. I talked to Miss Sullivan. We returned and she asked the mother, "Look, weren't you with me when I gave you a discussion and showed how you should launder and use the water wisely? Do you remember that you should launder your very light things first, and then the darker work clothes for the men last?"

The mother smiled. "Wait, I come from a long ways," she said, "I have 10 children. I launder first the things that need mending. This afternoon my sister comes to help me mend them in the sewing room. I want these things dry so that at the end of the day my laundry and my mending will be finished when I go home." We laughed at ourselves because the woman knew exactly what she wanted to do, and although it wasn't according to the way one would ordinarily launder, she had solved her problem. Experts don't always have the answer.

Miss Kerman was a dear, retired Papago teacher who worked in clay modeling. She stopped to visit the newly organized center at Sells and volunteered to introduce the craft to the children.

I promised to go to Tucson to purchase commercial clay, but Miss Kerman said she never used it. The best clay was found in only one place on the Papago Reservation, she explained. We must go out and haul our own.

Early one morning, the harrowing experience of "Operation Clay" materialized. Clarence, driver of the government car, assisted us. Five children in the four-year-olds group also went on the trip to help.

Two children plus all the containers and tools were in the government car of which Clarence was most protective. My pride and joy, a Lincoln Capri, carried three children and Miss Kerman. Clarence's last words before we started were, "I don't know how far we have to go, but it is way out in the boondocks over rough, hilly rutted lanes and maybe through an arroyo, and there might be water in it. I ought not to take this car there." Miss Kerman replied, "It's quite a ways, but drive as far as you can. We'll walk the rest of the way."

After driving through rough sandy ruts, Clarence feared we might become stuck way off in the wilderness, so we stopped to walk the rest of the way. The clay was found on the side of a gully. It was hard and had to be chopped out in hunks. All of us lugged the heavy pieces over to the tin containers. We rested frequently and I mentioned that it was a good thing no one saw us or we would be arrested for child labor. This was no idle observation either; for a few days later, if anyone had seen the children all laboring over the massive sifting, wetting, pounding, tempering process, they would be justified.

Under Miss Kerman's guidance, the children were thrilled to pound, pat, and pinch the clay into shape. They formed bowls, dishes, and small animals. She fired most of them and then she taught the children to rub them with stones until shiny and smooth. One day she sprinkled some white sand on the pieces and pressed the grains into the clay. I wondered about this, for we had practically

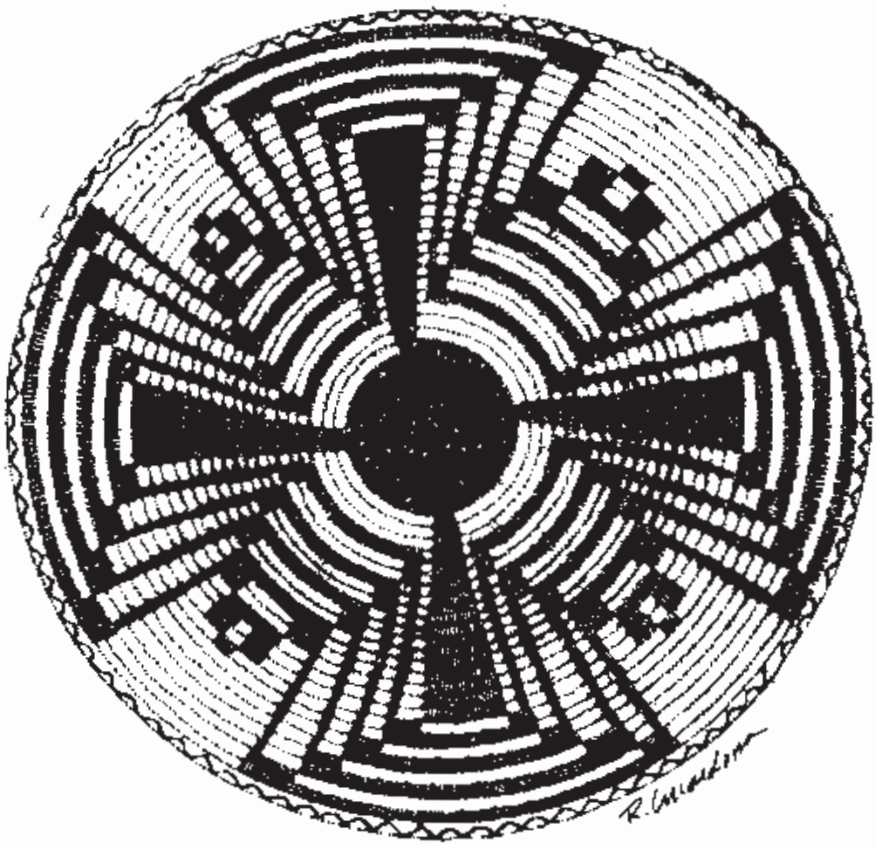
broken our arms sifting the clay so it would be smooth. She fired the few articles worthy of saving and after they were rubbed smooth, the tiny particles of sand shone like diamonds in the sun.

Did we ever go for more? Well, shortly after that, Lea Masters could be seen one Saturday taking a leisurely ride into Tucson for a couple of gallons of ready-mixed commercial clay.

Once during those busy days, the tribal council members had a large dinner party and entertained someone from the Bureau of Indian Affairs who had been very helpful to them in their work. During the dinner, council members presented the guest with some beautiful Papago baskets. Very impressed with the gracious friendliness, the next day I asked, "When I get ready to leave the Papago project, do you think the tribe will like me well enough to give me a little Papago basket?" True to form, Mr. Mackett, the tribal chairman, didn't answer, "Oh, yes, I'm sure they will." He said, "We'll just wait and see."

When it was time for me to depart and leave the program in good hands, the council members did have a tribal dinner meeting. I did not realize that the dinner was for me, since it was a regular meeting. During the course of the evening, Mr. Mackett stood up, "You know that Mrs. Masters is leaving us," he said. "She asked me once if we liked her well enough to give her a little Papago basket. I think we do, don't we?" They all shouted and clapped their hands. Out of his pocket, he took a very small woven basket with a cover. It was about three-quarters of an inch in diameter. He said, "Here's a little basket. Shall we give her this?" I was overcome because those little miniature baskets are really very, very special.

"But I think we like her better than that," he continued, "so shall we give her something else?" They all clapped and from under the table he brought out the largest, most beautiful woven basket I had ever seen. It was about two feet in diameter. I truly was overcome and have cherished that basket more than almost anything.



Artist's rendering of the large Papago basket presented to Mrs. Masters at the end of her work with the Papago project.

A Final Word

Looking back, I feel very much like Alan Lerner, who wrote in his autobiography, "The Street Where I Live":

> *"This is a story of climaxes and endings and the sundown of a decade that blazed with joy, excitement and triumphs; so much, in fact, that as I look back I am haunted by the fear that perhaps I drank the wine too fast to taste it, and instead of slowing down to enjoy the scenery kept my foot on the accelerator and my eyes on the road ahead, gazing only occasionally from side to side and waiting far too long to glance in the rear view mirror."*

Most important in my rear view mirror were the children — the very young pre-schoolers — who became the focus of my professional life. The three-year-old who once looked up to me and said, "We're really awfully good friends, aren't we?" or little Eva Strauss of the United Nations school who once said, "We are sweet friends and love each other" — these are among the most memorable experiences of my life.

If I had it to do over, would I have chosen to continue in the grammar school at Port Jervis and retire after 30 years? One teacher I know did just that. She has no wrinkles and appears happy. I look at myself and want to erase the wrinkles. But then I remember that statement, "Don't be ashamed of your wrinkles. You've earned them through your efforts, so be proud of them."

I'm afraid that even now, should another challenge present itself and I was needed, I would gird my loins for action once again and say, "Ready to roll."

A photographic portrait of Lea Cowles taken in the late 1940s.

Lena Agnes Boyle

(Professionally, Lea Cowles)

1896	Born November 6 in Canandaigua, New York
1915	Graduated from Canandaigua Academy with College Entrance Diploma
1917	Graduated from Brockport Normal School with a Permanent New York State Teaching Certificate
1917-19	Seventh Grade Teacher at Port Jervis, New York
1919-20	Seventh Grade Teacher at Caldwell, New Jersey
1920-23	Seventh Grade Teacher, Port Jervis, New York
1923-24	Fourth Grade Teacher and Principal, Port Jervis, New York
1924-25	Eighth Grade Teacher, Nyack, New York
1925-26	Fourth Grade Teacher, Friends School, Brooklyn, New York
1929	Graduated from Columbia University Teachers College with a Bachelor of Science in Education degree
1932	Graduated from Columbia University with a Master of Arts degree in Child Development and Parent Education

1932-34	Assistant Teacher of three-year-olds group, Child Development Institute, Columbia University Teachers College; also research assistant under Dr. Arthur T. Jersild, assistant professor of education and research and an Associate in the Child Development Institute.
1934	Director of Nursery Schools/Parent Education, Virgin Islands
1934-36	Director of Nursery Schools/Parent Education, Puerto Rico
1936-38	Director of Nursery Schools, State of Virginia
1938-41	Director of Nursery Schools/Parent Education, Virgin Islands
1941-43	Director of Nursery Schools, State of Alabama
1943-47	Instructor of Child Development, Child Development Division, School of Home Economics, University of Alabama; organized the Infant Laboratory for Observation and Training
1947-48	Leave of absence to organize the United Nations Nursery School, Lake Success, New York
1948-62	Associate Professor, School of Home Economics, University of Alabama
1962	Resigned position at University of Alabama
1964	Consultant on Special Infant Laboratory Program, School of Home Economics, Oklahoma State University
1965-67	Consultant for pilot Child Development and Parent-Child Center Program, Papago Indian Tribe, Arizona
1968	Conducted Council of Churches workshop for teachers under the Migrant Opportunity Program, Tucson, Arizona
	Conference, Training Navajo Indian Teachers for Head Start Program, Shiprock, Arizona

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BROCKPORT STATE NORMAL SCHOOL 1936-1942
BROCKPORT STATE TEACHERS COLLEGE 1942-1944

DR. DONALD M. TOWER
BROCKPORT STATE TEACHERS COLLEGE 1944-1964

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BROCKPORT STATE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION 1964-1965

DR. ALBERT W. BROWN
STATE UNIVERSITY, COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES AT BROCKPORT 1965-1981

DR. JOHN E. VAN de WETERING
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK COLLEGE AT BROCKPORT 1981-

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MR. AND MRS. JOHN L. BOYLE *(nephew)*

MRS. KEITH MASTERS *(daughter-in-law)*

MRS. HELEN C. MIDDLEBROOK *(sister)*

MR. AND MRS. KEVIN REDDOUT *(grandniece)*

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